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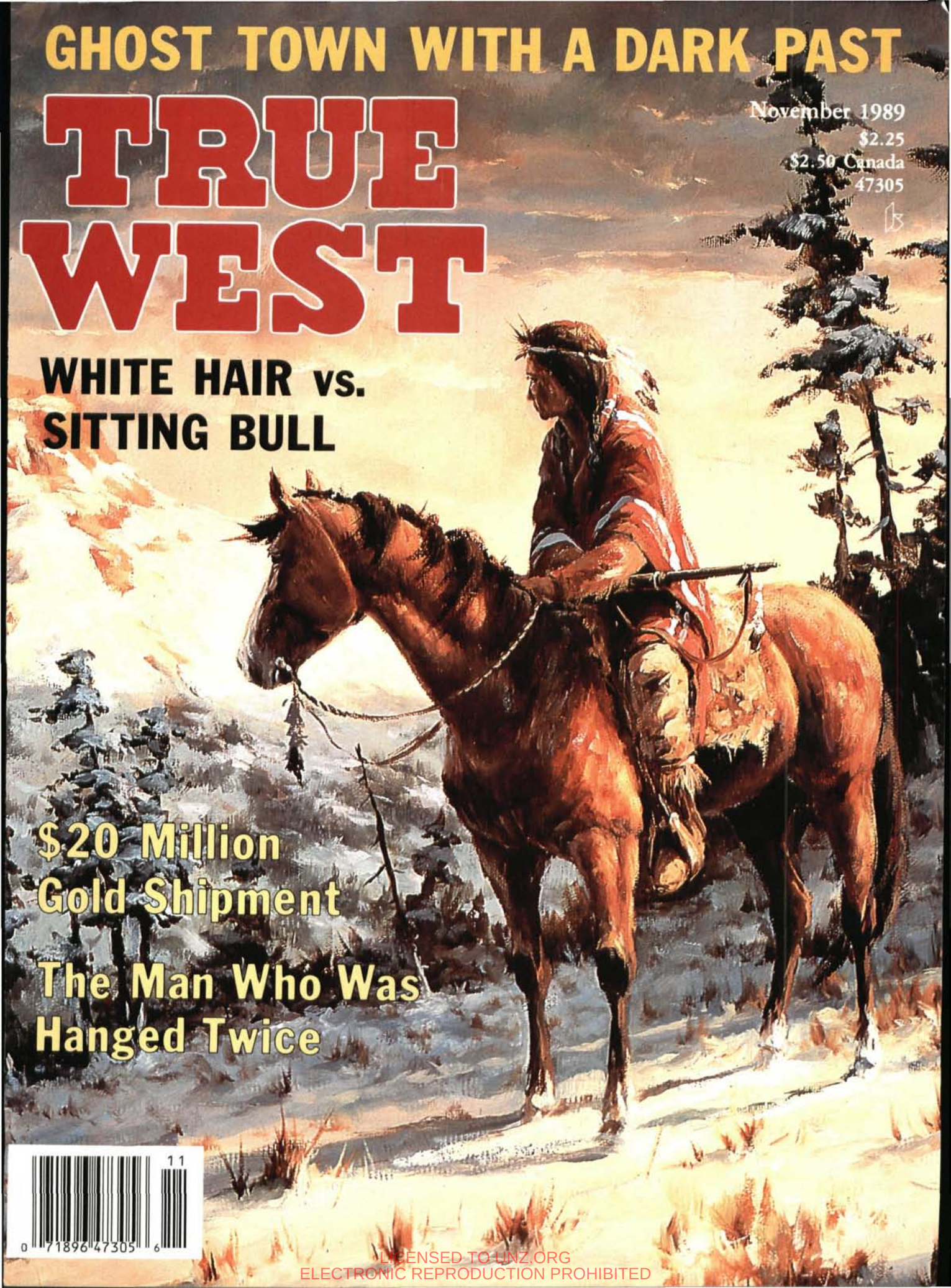

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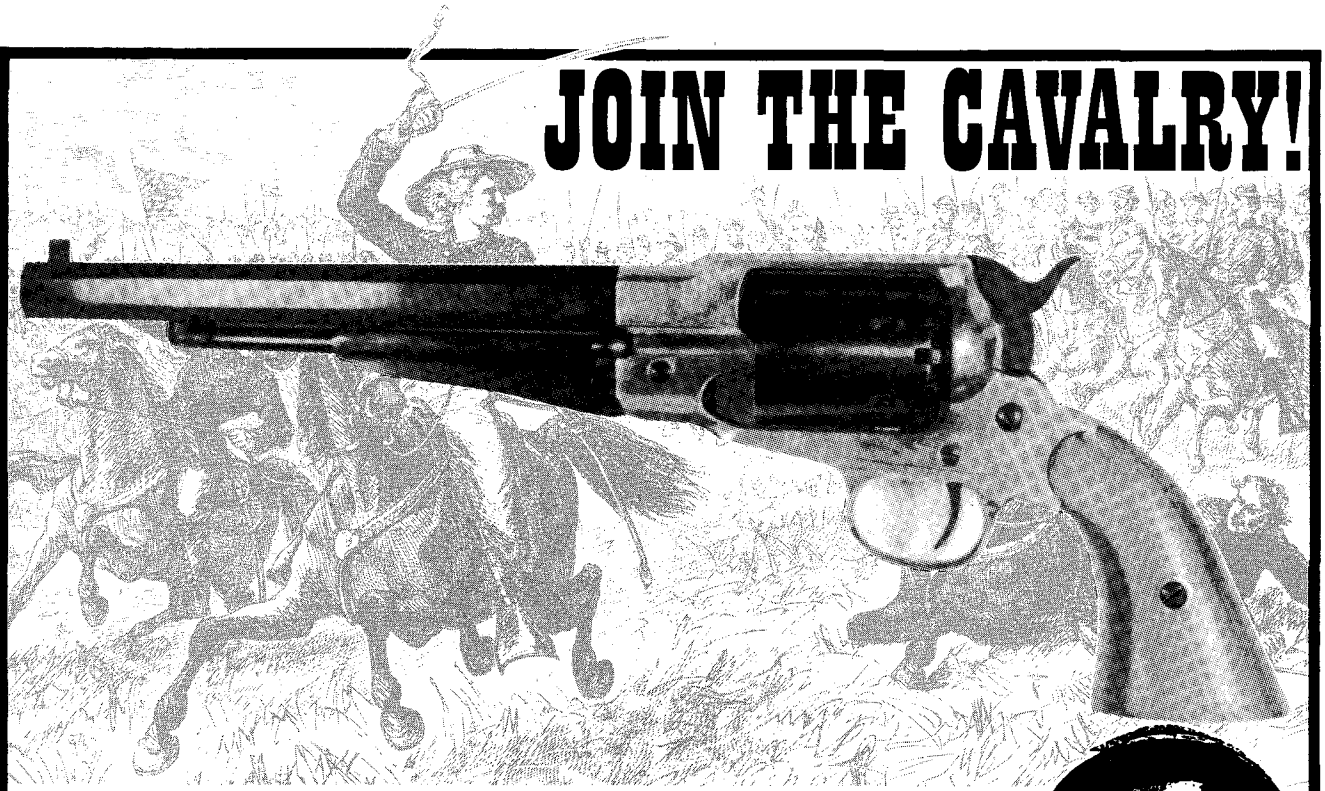

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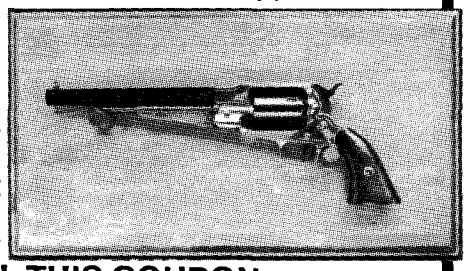

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TRUE WEST

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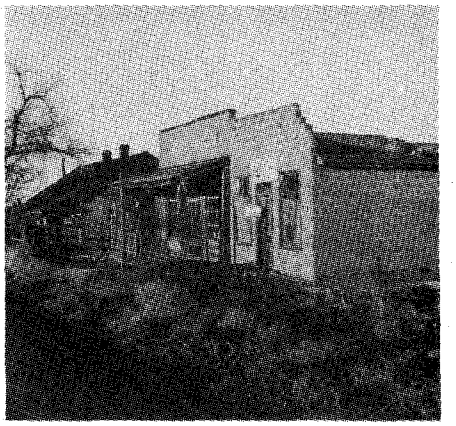

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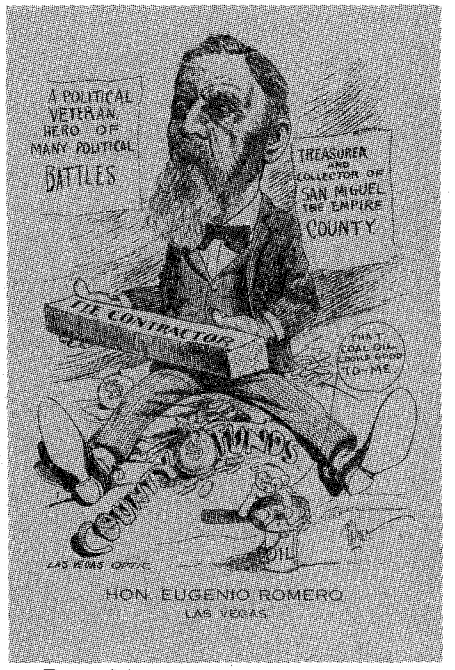

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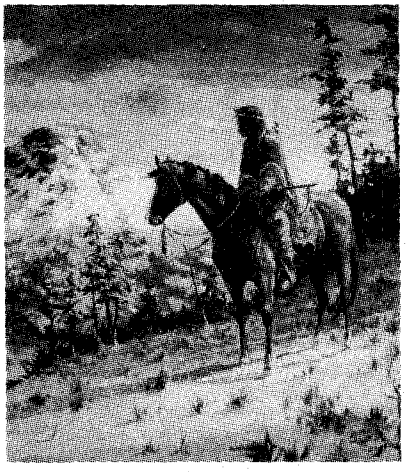
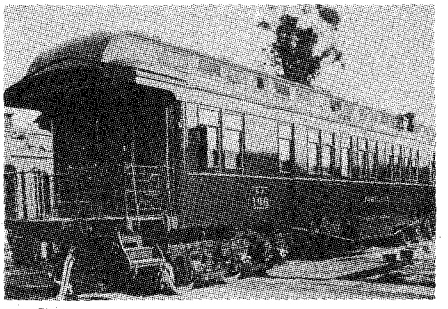


OUR COVER

"Through the Pines," by Gary Lynn Roberts.



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From the Editor

Howdy, folks! This is a fish story, of sorts, about the big one that got away and then took the hook again. It's intended mostly for the gent who founded this rag back in 1953, Joe "Hosstail" Small, but the rest of you all are welcome to read it, too.

If Hoss's experience over some thirty years with this outfit was anything like mine has been, he probably saw a lot of treasures slip through his fingers. Not the Lost Dutchman kind, but the publishing kind—art, manuscripts, and mementoes that might someday be worth a few bucks but whose real value is purely sentimental.

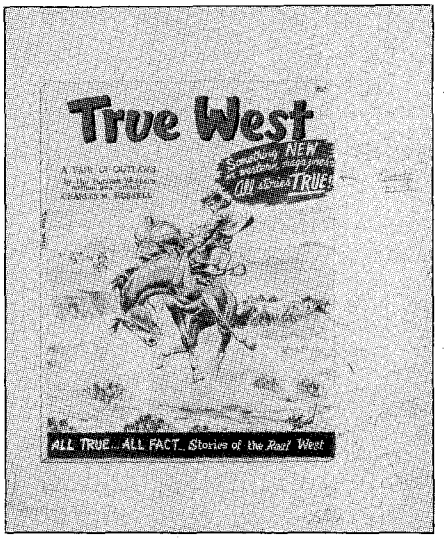
I'm always shipping something I wish I could keep back to a contributor, whether it's an original cover painting or an illustration for a story, a rare old photograph or an important new book. If anybody were getting rich here, we'd be buying all that stuff for the company or our personal collections, and our closets and attics would be overflowing with western memorabilia. But like most everybody else these days, we're happy to have beans on the table, oats in the feedbag, and half a tank of gas in the pickup truck. So I spend a lot of time licking address labels and slapping them on packages I'd like to keep.

To that add the fact that for a few years in the early eighties our outfit was running around the country like a steer with a belly full of loco weed on the open range. Every time we moved, a little of our gear managed to disappear along the way. And even when a feller is staying put and being careful to tend his belongings, he's always managing to lose a caseknife or his matches or one of his young 'uns.

I'd been hired on here two years before I laid eyes on a copy of the first issue of TRUE WEST. It was sold at an auction for, as I recollect, forty dollars, and I had to sit back and lick my chops. We finally tracked down a complete set of TRUE WEST and its companions, OLD WEST and FRONTIER TIMES for the office, but I sure would have never thought a publishing company would have to buy back its own durned mags from a loyal subscriber!

Once in a blue moon, though, the one that got away takes the bait again. Then you do your dangedest to reel it in. Even after it's safely in the creel, your heart is racing and you can't believe your good luck. That's what happened to our ramrod, Steve Gragert, and me not long ago at the annual rendezvous of the National Association for Outlaw and Lawmen History in Oklahoma City.

I was innocently listening to Bob DeArment's talk on "George Goodell, Forgotten Gunfighter," when a gent named Hank Clark sat down beside me



and held out a drawing for me to see. Now, if you've read any of the stories Bob DeArment has written for TRUE WEST, you know that what he has to say is always interesting. So I merely glanced down at Hank's drawing and then looked back up to concentrate on the exploits of George Goodell. Until I realized I had just seen Randy Steffen's original art work for the cover of TRUE WEST, Volume 1, Number 1—complete with the color overlay for the logo and cover blurbs still attached, along with the publisher's handwritten specs.

Hank had stumbled across it at one of the book dealers' booths, and he reckoned it belonged with Western Publications. So did I. So did Steve when I showed it to him. Its monetary value might not be great, but to us it was priceless. Needless to say, after hammering out a fair price, we were lucky enough to land that big one the second time around, and we brought it home in our creel. I thought that you all—and especially Hoss—would like to know we're going to have it mounted and hang it on our wall as a constant reminder of where we came from—and where we need to go from here.

John Joerschke

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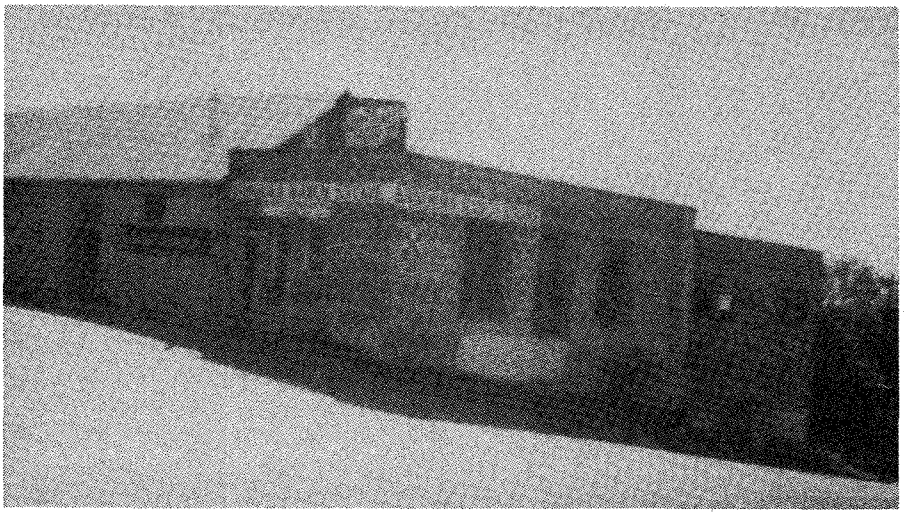
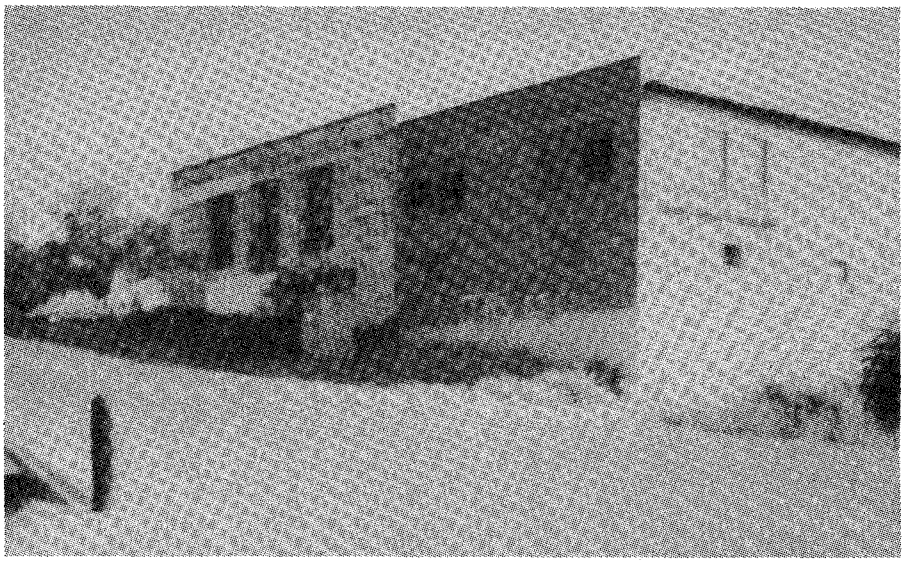
The descendants of the Hay family don't remember the story of the shooting recounted in "Murder at the Blind Tiger Saloon" by Wilfred D. Thorne (March 1989 TRUE WEST) the same way as the Thornes. George Hay owned the saloon. He was a Mormon and for years was the judge of Bandera County, Texas. He closed the saloon down after the shooting.

His daughter Ola, who just celebrated her 100th birthday, says the saloon never, ever was called the "Blind Tiger." According to the Hays, the shooting occured inside the saloon, and as there were no windows facing the river, it would have been impossible for anyone on the other side of the river to have witnessed it. If the shooting had occurred outside the front door, as the





Two views of George Hay's saloon from the northwest (top) and the southwest (bottom). The front door is on the north and would not have been visible from the Stapletons' house to the south.

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article claims, the Stapletons still could not have seen it, for the door faced toward the town of Bandera, away from the Stapletons and out of their line of vision. Photos of the building, which is now a feed store, are enclosed.

So goes history!—**Frankie Davis Glenn, 102 Hughes, Boerne, Texas 78006.**

Numbers Game

The June '89 "Answer Man" column includes a statement that Kit Carson was born in 1890. He was not; his correct date of birth is December 24, 1809. Kit's parents were visiting the home of Christopher Houston in Madison County, Kentucky, when his mother went into labor. The Carsons named their newborn son after their host.

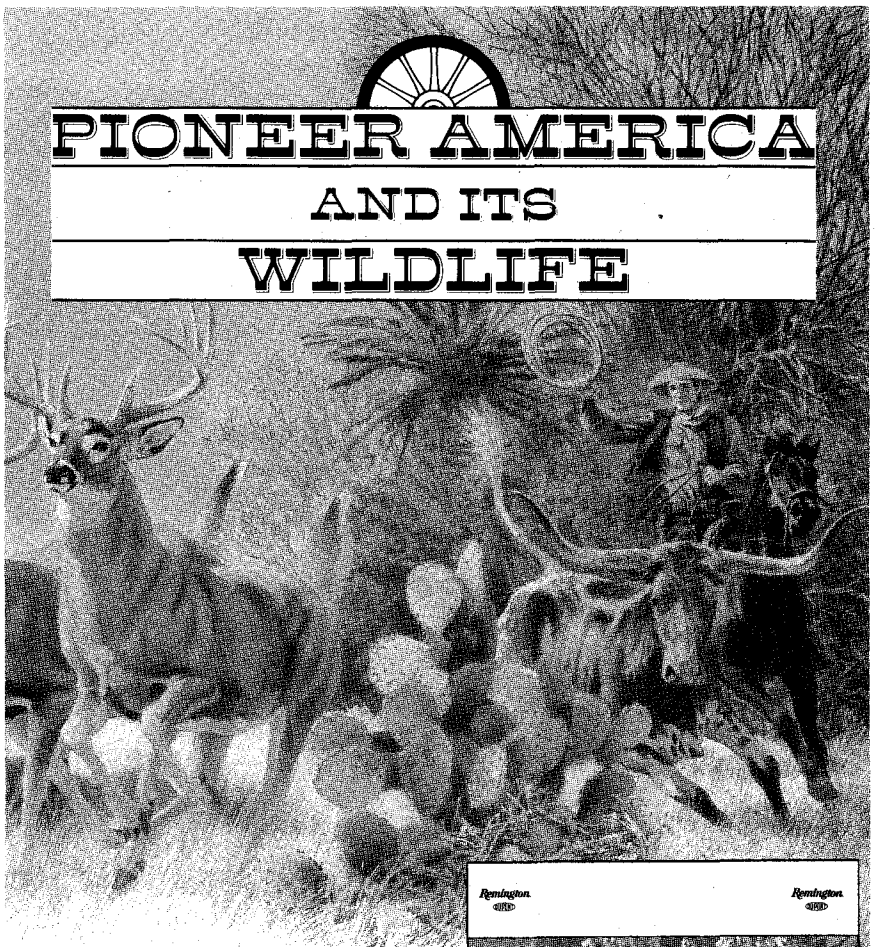
My great-grandmother Mary Eudora Houston-Sappington was a descendant of Christopher Columbus Houston. My father's mother, Ophelia, was Eudora's daughter.—**Steve Peters, 2427 California Avenue, Klamath Falls, Oregon 97601.**

Editor's Note: Thanks, pard, for the correction and the additional information about Kit Carson. "Answer Man" Chuck Parsons had the date correct; we transposed the numbers when we set the type. Because they look right when taken out of context, dates and numbers can be a proofreader's most dreaded enemies.

In Search of the Lost Article

I am trying to find a copy of an article I wrote that was published in "Wild Old Days." It was about the time in the 1930s when I learned I was no cowboy. I was hired by Bob Moore, who was business manager of the Waggoner Ranch (DDD) in Vernon, Texas.

Fred Albright was wagon boss; Grady Ashley was wagon cook; Bill Cole rode the rough string. Out of almost 300 saddle horses, Bill rode the ones that the



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others could not or would not ride. Jack Reed was hoodlum wagon driver. Both wagons were pulled by mules.

The cattle were gathered in each pasture in the morning and held in the open for cutting, branding, etc., in the afternoon. The cow wagon moved every day from February till May. We camped in the open; each man had a bed roll and army cot, which was his only home. He had from twelve to eighteen horses in his string and changed horses every day at noon. Cotton Covington was horse wrangler.

The cowboys that I can remember were Frank Handley, Robert McAlroy, Bob Burton, Tom Austin (the wildest man I ever saw on a horse, bar none), Foots Ryder, and one called Brewer. There were from twelve to fourteen cowboys with the wagon at all times.

Our food was coffee, beef, beans, sour dough biscuits, canned milk, canned tomatoes, syrup, and dried fruit. It was cooked over open fires in Dutch ovens.

Pay was $100 per month for the wagon boss, $60 for the cook, and $75 for the rough string rider. Starting pay for riders was $35 per month; it was raised to $40, daylight till dark, seven days per week, 365 days per year.

I sure enjoy TRUE WEST and will sure continue to subscribe to all three.—**Bert J. Skipper, %Sardis Store, Clayton, Oklahoma 74536.**

Editor's Note: Folks, we're scratchin' our haids tryin' to locate Bert's "Wild Old Days" article. If any of you all happen to know what issue it appeared in, drop him a line. He'll appreciate it!

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History and Beer

While reading "Mayor DeLong and the Camp Grant Massacre" (July 1989 TRUE WEST), I noticed the photograph of the interior of the Congress Hall Saloon in Tucson on page thirty-eight. Clearly visible in the photograph is a sign at the right of the bar that reads, "Pabst—Milwaukee, Wis." Although the caption with the photograph states that it was taken in May 1868 and that date appears in the photo itself, Pabst Brewing Company was not known by that name until 1889. Prior to that, and specifically in 1868, the brewery was known as the Phillip Best Brewing Company. Consequently, this photo would have to have been taken sometime after 1889! Just thought you might be interested. I enjoy your magazine.—**Mark Syarto, 350 Morris Street, Pewaukee, Wisconsin 53072.**

Editor's Note: If there's anything worth knowing about Tucson, you'll find it in C.L. Sonnichsen's book, *Tucson*. According to Doc Sonnichsen, the Congress Hall Saloon was built in 1868 and was the site of informal meetings among territorial legislators when Tucson was the capital of Arizona. The 1868 date over the bar no doubt refers to the year the saloon was built and not to when the photo was taken. Thanks for setting us straight, pard. If you're ever out this way, I'll buy you a beer!

The Indians Are Cut Out Again

Howdy! The Montana statehood stamp shown in "Western Roundup" (April 1989 TRUE WEST) includes only a portion of the original painting, "C.M. Russell and Friends." The complete painting depicts a group of mounted Indians in a draw to the right and a buf-

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falo skeleton in front of Russell's horse. Looks like the government has once again cut out the Indians! I hear the Indians in Montana are upset, and rightfully so.—**Bill Mathers, 7583 S. Ogden Way, Littleton, Colorado 80122.**

Editor's Note: With the price of stamps these days, you'd think the postal service could have afforded the whole painting. I bet Charley Russell would have been irate.

An Adventurous Life

"Guthrie: High, Wide, and Handsome," by Glenn Shirley (April 1989 TRUE WEST) and another story a while back both mentioned the name James C. Grimes. I have a friend who lives in Fairmont, North Dakota, whose name is Elwood Grimes. He is about ninety years old and told me about his father, James C. Grimes, who as a young man was a teamster with the supply trains that came up from Chadron, Nebraska, with supplies for Custer's troops at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. He helped dig the grave and bury Custer on the hillside. He told his children many times how it was done. Elwood Grimes told me that his dad also had been a Texas Ranger.

James C. Grimes came to White Rock, South Dakota, about 1890. He did not marry until 1900. He and his pal Charley Sweet were wildfowl market hunters in the White Rock area. Every night they would pack the birds in barrels with ice at White Rock and ship them to Minneapolis, Minnesota, by train. I have three of the duck decoys that they used.

When I was about ten years old, I fished with Charley Sweet, and he told me about his market hunting and about how he had hunted deer in Wisconsin for the logging camp kitchens as a boy.—**Fred Trende, Route 2, Box 110, Rosholt, South Dakota 57260**

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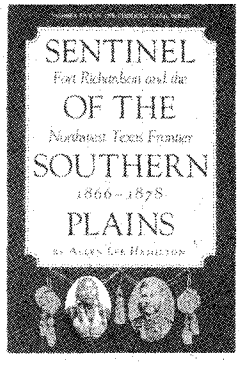

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Western Art Museum Opens

The Eiteljorg Museum of American Indian and Western Art, a new museum devoted to the interpretation of the American West, officially opened its doors to the public on Saturday, June 24, 1989.

The new museum contains one of the finest collections of western art and Native American artifacts in the country, according to its first executive director, Michael Duty. The Eiteljorg is also one of only two American museums east of the Mississippi which combines these two types of art (the second being the Rockwell Museum in Corning, New York).

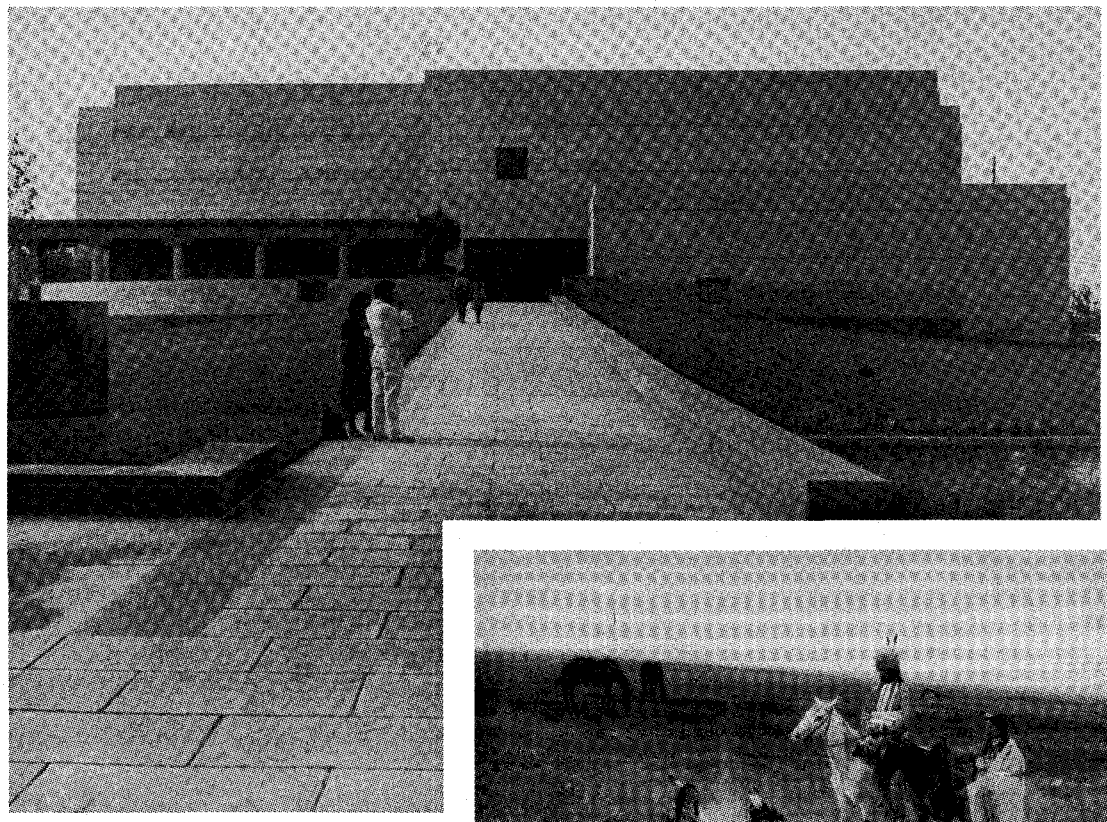
Under construction since October 1987, the museum was founded through the collections of Harrison Eiteljorg, now eighty-five years old, an Indianapolis businessman and philanthropist, who went west on coal mining ventures in the 1940s and fell in love with the land, the people, and the art.

The new museum contains three permanent galleries. The American Western Gallery exhibits paintings and works of sculpture from the early nineteenth century to the present. Prominent artists represented include Frederic Remington, Charles Russell, Albert Bierstadt, and Thomas Moran.

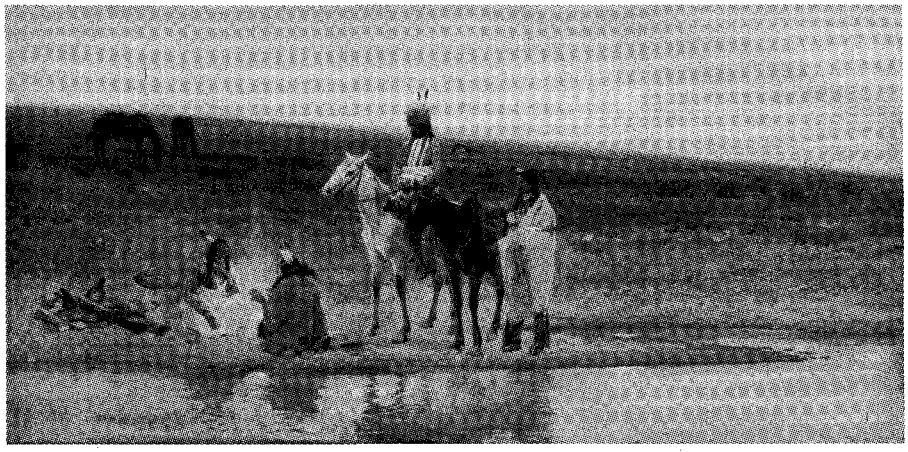
The second permanent exhibit, the Southwestern Gallery contains twentieth century paintings from the American Southwest. Exhibited in this gallery is the museum's collection of paintings by members of the original Taos (New Mexico) Society of Artists, known as the "Taos Ten." These artists include Joseph Henry Sharp, Ernest Blumenschein, and Bert Phillips. Also represented in this gallery are other artists associated with the Southwest, including Georgia O'Keeffe, John Sloan, Marsden Hartley, and Robert Henri.

The Native American Gallery, which contains artifacts from all regions of North America, includes basketry, pottery, clothing, weaving, and other utilitarian objects. The strength of the collections lies in materials from the Northwest Coast and the Woodlands regions.

The museum collection also includes three pieces of major outdoor sculpture: "The Greeting," a twelve-foot bronze Indian by George Carlson; a bronze



The new Eiteljorg Museum of American Indian and Western Art is designed in an appropriate southwestern motif.



Henry F. Farny, "Indians On The Plains—1896."

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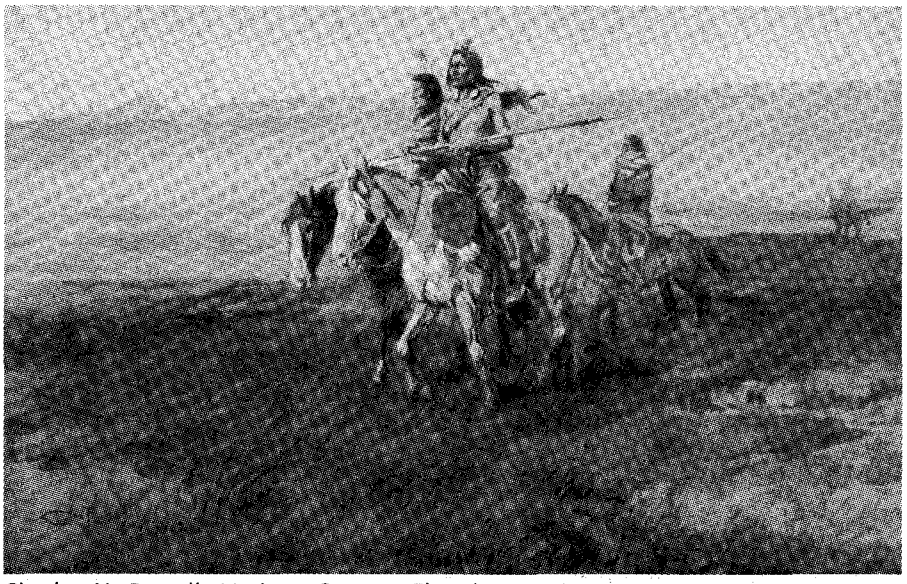


Charles M. Russell, "Indians Crossing The Plains—1902."

sculpture of five deer running through water by Kenneth Bunn; and "Time Landscape of Indianapolis," a natural site sculpture by Alan Sonfist.

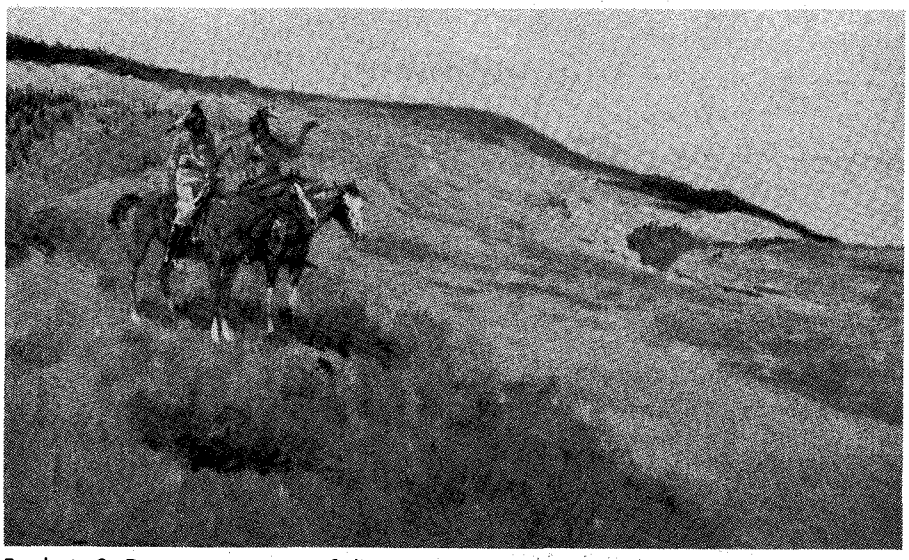
The highly unusual museum building contains 73,000 square feet and is southwestern in motif. Designed by architect Jonathan Hess, the stone building is intended to elicit images of southwestern adobe structures and landscapes. It contains materials from around the world.

A substantial part of the museum's holdings was also acquired through a merger with Indianapolis' former Museum of Indian Heritage, a smaller institution founded in 1967 by Mr. and Mrs. James Lawton.

The museum presents programs on a daily basis, including special exhibitions, lectures, seminars, craft demonstrations, and travel opportunities.

Also part of the museum is the White River Trader, the large museum store which sells quality items, including original art, authentic Indian jewelry and clothing, and home items from the Southwest.

For more information on the new Eiteljorg Museum, write: Eiteljorg Museum, 500 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204, or telephone (317) 636-WEST.



Frederic S. Remington, "Top of the Big Horns."

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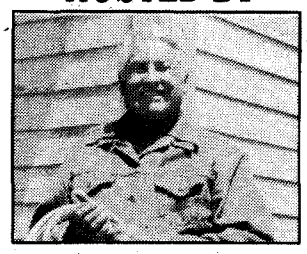

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Outlaw Genealogy

By CHUCK PARSONS

A very interesting photo and letter dealing with outlaw Bill Longley was sent to me by Ray E. Graves, Route 1, Box 88, Richland Springs, Texas 76871. Graves' collection of TRUE WEST magazines dates back to the days when founder Joe "Hosstail" Small was a young man!

Ray E. Graves sent this photo of his cousin, Bill Longley. He also hopes someone will be able to identify the men in the photo at left.

Graves writes, "When I was a young man, my grandmother, Leacy Ann Lewis Henderson (born 1851), daughter of Dr. William Legett Lewis (born 1816), told me that Bill Longley was her cousin. After reading Bill O'Neal's "Great Western Gunfights" column on Longley in the April 1989 TRUE WEST, I wondered how my grandmother and Longley were related.

Texas outlaw Bill Longley was the son of Campbell Longley. Campbell's sister, Mary Catherine married Charles M. Tyler. Their daughter married William Lewis, who was the father of Mr. Graves' grandmother. The photo reproduced here shows Bill Longley not long before his execution in Giddings, Texas, in 1878.

Mr. Graves also sent a photograph of two young men and asked about their possible identification. I do not know who they are, but perhaps a reader can help Mr. Graves, who is anxious for any assistance.

Elusive Badman

Outlaw George Musgrave is the subject of a letter from Beth Walker, 114 Cliffside Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78231. "I have been trying for years through research to learn something more about him than our family tradition. He was the son of Bennett Musgrave and Prudence Walker Musgrave,

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born in Atascosa County, Texas, about 1878."

The 1880 Atascosa County census lists the Bennett Musgrave family, composed of wife Prudence and children Calvin V., Addana, Julia, Fannie M., and two-year-old George W. All the children were born in Texas. The father is listed as a stock raiser, and the children are listed as working on the farm or "at home." Bennett Musgrave's younger brother, Calvin, also lived in Atascosa County at the time of the census.

Of special interest is that outlaw Musgrave was a first cousin to Texas Ranger Alonzo Oden. Oden was a member of John Hughes' Company D of the Frontier Battalion. Musgrave left the United States and died in Paraguay on August 15, 1947. Ms. Walker would appreciate any additional information about him.

Sporting Men. . . and Women

"As a recently assigned docent for Columbia State Park here in California's Mother Lode gold rush country, I discovered an inexplicable lack of information about Columbia's gamblers, or as they were described, 'sporting men.' I have found some small amount of information, but need help to find sources." That request comes from Robert C. Buckler, P.O. Box 326, Soulsbyville, California 95372. Included with Mr. Buckler's letter was a list of a dozen gamblers, including one woman, Madame Moustache.

Anyone interested in gambling in the Old West should first consult Robert K. DeArment's book, *Knights of the Green Cloth* (University of Oklahoma Press), which provides an excellent overview of the subject. Many of the gamblers Mr. Buckler listed are included in that book.

One reason why gamblers are so hard to trace is that by the very nature of their occupation they left few records. Often their names are known to us only because of a run-in with the law or some other serious difficulty. To a large degree their lives were centered on the frontier rather than on established society.

DeArment's book provides an extensive bibliography listing many sources from which to learn more.

Texan's Resting Place

"I was walking through the cemetery in Osage, Texas, and came across an interesting marker," writes Dave Shaeffer, 1308½ W. Main Street, Gatesville, Texas 76528. "The person buried there is John C. Moore, a brigadier general in the Confederate Army. I can't remember all the battles listed on the

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marker, but I do remember one—Shiloh."

John Creed Moore was born at Red Bridge, Tennessee, February 28, 1824. He graduated from West Point in 1849 and first saw military action against the Seminole Indians in Florida. He later worked as a civil engineer and then as a teacher in Kentucky schools.

When the Civil War began, Moore entered from Texas as a captain in the regular army. He was commissioned colonel of the Second Texas Infantry Regiment and was promoted to brigadier general on May 26, 1862. The regiment did fight at Shiloh. Moore distinguished himself at the battle of Corinth in October 1862. He also fought in the battles of Vicksburg, Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge, and others.

He resigned his commission on February 3, 1864, and finished out the war in the ordnance department. After the war he lived in Texas and resumed his teaching career. Moore died on December 31, 1910, and is buried at Osage, Coryell County, Texas.

Calamity Jane and Wild Bill

The authenticity of a film about Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickok prompted a question from Paul Dutschman, P.O. Box 512, Temple, Texas 76503.

Although the movie may be exciting, it contains little of truth. Hickok and Calamity Jane met only by coincidence, as the gunman took no special interest in her. He no doubt considered himself above her status.

Hickok was killed August 2, 1876, and is buried in Mount Mariah Cemetery in Deadwood, South Dakota. Calamity Jane died August 1, 1903, and is buried some twenty feet away from Wild Bill. Her stone gives the date of her death as August 2, tampering with history to make it correspond with the date of Hickok's death, although they died twenty-seven years apart. She may have asked to be buried beside Wild Bill, but that is a matter of speculation.

The most authoritative biography of Hickok is Joseph G. Rosa's *They Called Him Wild Bill* (University of Oklahoma Press).

If you have a question, send it to Chuck Parsons, Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076. Please keep questions brief. Sign your full name and address, including zip code. Names and addresses will be published if question is used. Space limitations may not permit us to use all questions.

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Ghost with a Dark Memory

By JOANNA SAMPSON

At 9:55 a.m. the first in a series of signal bombs went off in the military camp. At 10:00 a.m. a second bomb exploded, and the third a few seconds later. Suddenly, bullets began ripping through the tents. Screaming women and children ran for their lives. Men cursed and reached for their weapons as a day of horror began.

It looks a little like an abandoned Hollywood movie set, this tiny, crumbling town out on the plains south of Walsenburg, Colorado. The false fronts on the stores are splintered and grayed with years; the sun filters through holes in roofs and walls, and broken glass makes jagged, crystal smiles in all the windows of the town. Nowhere is there any indication of the grim and bloody memories that whisper around the buildings or blow along the dusty street, except for one weathered sign that gives the name of the town. . . Ludlow!

Cactus opens exotic, fuschia-pink blossoms, and the town is a ruin. The plains at Ludlow are peaceful now, but on this ground seventy-five years ago, on April 20, 1914, the bloodiest union fight in Colorado was fought as coal miners made a desperate attempt to better their working conditions.

Working conditions in coal mines throughout the world have always been hazardous, but during the early years of this century, Colorado's mines held the dubious distinction of killing twice as many miners as did mines in other parts of the United States.

There were lots of ways to die down in the mines. A miner could be blown to bits instantly in a mine explosion, or he could linger over his dying for days in a sealed tomb caused by a cave-in rescuers could not penetrate. Falling slabs of rock and coal killed the biggest percentage of men, though many others met their Maker after being crushed against the walls or run over by loaded cars of coal. Some were electrocuted, others kicked right through the pearly gates by ill-tempered mules.

Age and mining experience did not seem to be much of a factor when the death tolls are scrutinized. In 1913, the year of the Ludlow strike, the Colorado Mine Inspector's report on fatal accidents lists men of all ages and nationalities as victims.

There was Perfecto Clark, seventeen years old, who was employed at the Delagua Mine as a car oiler on the tipple; he was killed by having his arm torn off when he got caught in a gear wheel. Or there was Mike Streenar, age fifty-seven, married and the father of six children, killed in a massive fall of rock at the Williamsville Mine. In the mine at Starkville, a miner was kicked by a mule and thrown against a steel pipe which ran through his head. A friend later testified that no medical assistance was available for him down in the mine. In fact, the wounded miner lay at the bottom of the shaft for three or four hours before he was taken to the top and placed in the blacksmith shop. Nothing could be done for him there, and, in desperation, the men put greasy waste on his head. It wasn't long until the greasy stuff came bubbling out of his mouth, and he died after about five hours. His friend noted that when the superintendent came by, he asked if the mule got hurt!

It is hardly surprising to note that a bitter and macabre joke heard often among the miners was that "a

Ludlow, Colorado, ghost town.

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company mule is worth lots more than a miner!"

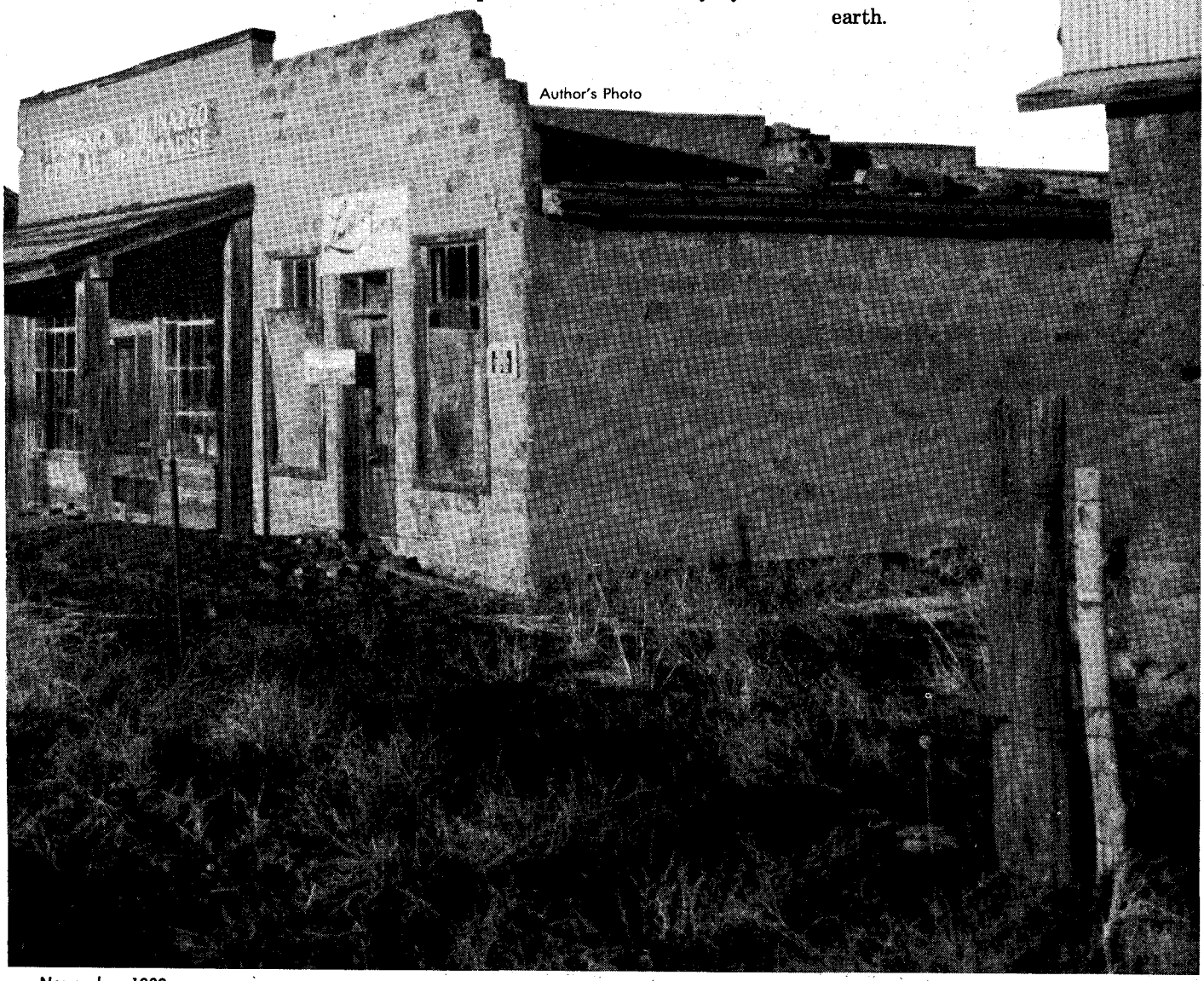
Oh, they died exquisitely, and frequently, down in the mines of Colorado. But they had a lot of other grievances against the powerful coal companies, too, grievances that they could not talk about because they had no union and no bargaining power against the coal companies. That high death toll reflected a gross negligence on the part of the companies concerning the safety of the mines. In addition, miners were denied the eight-hour day, and a number of state mining laws were being ignored by the companies.

Finally, seven demands were drawn up and presented to the coal owners: recognition of the union; a raise in wages; an eight-hour work day; pay for dead work, which consisted of brushing, timbering, removing falls, handling of impurities, etc.; a checkweighman at all mines to be elected by the miners without interference by company officials in the election; the right to trade in any store they chose and the right to select their own boarding places and doctors; the enforcement of the Colorado mining laws; and the abolition of the guard system which had prevailed in the camps for so many years.

Long before those demands were drawn up, miners had tried to form unions. The mine owners fought every union organization attempt with blunt tactics that left no doubt about their philosophy of organized labor. Union miners were fired, tarred and feathered, threatened, beaten, or rounded up and deported across state lines and abandoned on remote stretches of prairie where they could ponder their misdeeds as they trudged over the inhospitable landscape in search of food and shelter.

When embryonic unions gained enough strength to call a strike, the companies retaliated swiftly by importing labor. Beguiling recruitment ads were sent to various foreign countries extolling the virtues of the United States and making it clear that this was the land of "milk and honey." Workers came into the state in droves, desperate for jobs, bewildered by the harsh reality of this promised utopia, and often speaking not one word of English. The coal companies had, of course, neglected to inform the immigrants that they were replacing miners who were showing their dissatisfaction with company policy by going out on strike.

Scabs! this was the term applied to these new workers, and in the eyes of a union miner, a scab was the most loathsome, despicable creature on the face of the earth.



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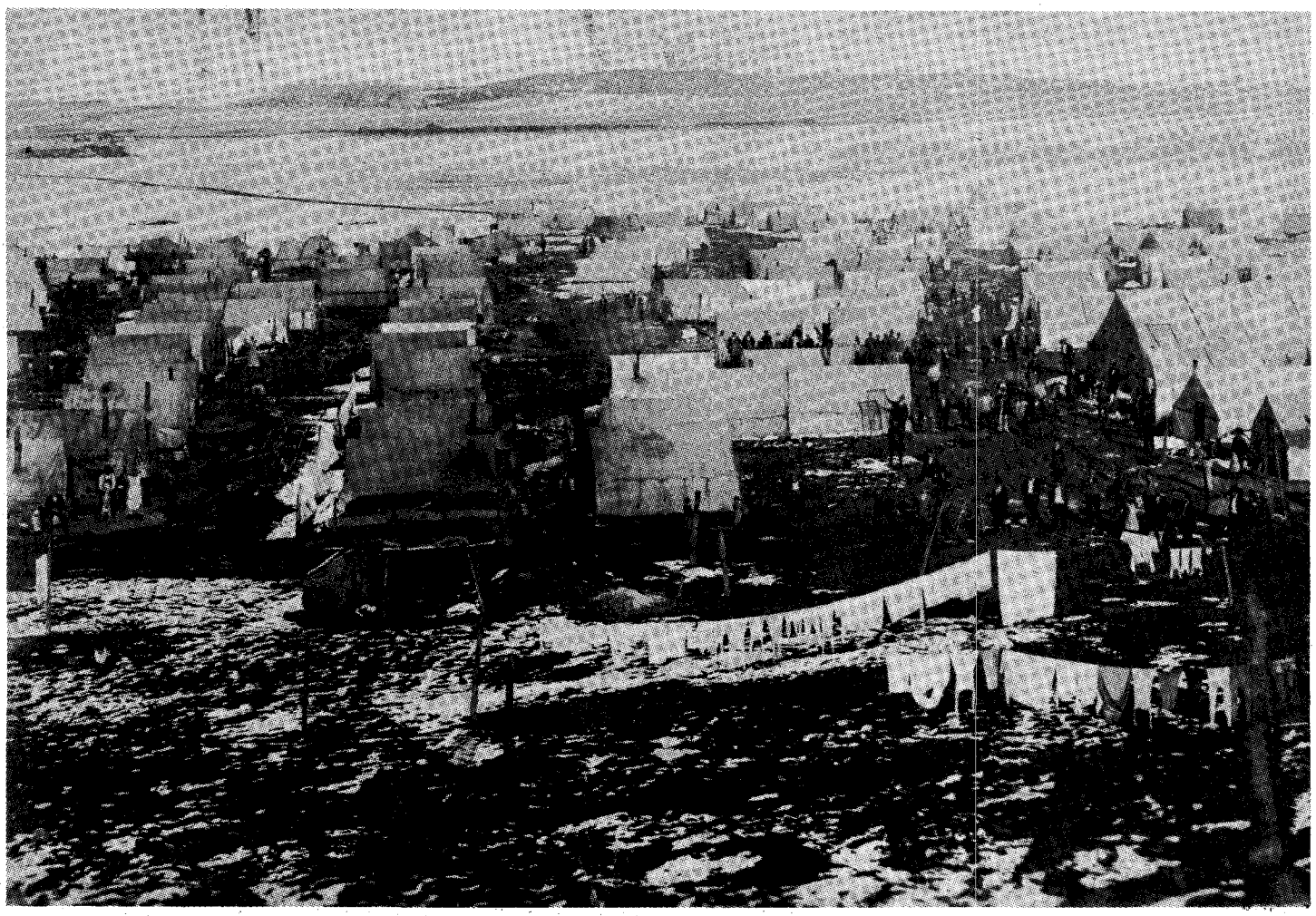

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The miners' tent colony at Ludlow before the massacre . . .

Nevertheless, by 1911, many different nationalities were represented in the coal mines of Colorado. It wasn't long until the coal mine inspector was sounding an ominous warning concerning the employment of "green men who are shipped in to take the place of union miners." The inexperienced miners caused the accident and fatality lists to soar even higher.

It was said that the coal companies encouraged the suspicions and rivalries that cropped up in the coal camps between different races. Certainly many a camp could be described aptly as a "little United Nations of the poor." These foreigners, with their strange ethnic patterns and language barriers, seemed to pose a threat in the minds of countless upstanding citizens in the state, particularly in view of the unrest in Europe which was to lead to America's involvement in World War I a few years later. Any foreigner could be looked upon as a foe or a traitor.

The mine owners promptly jumped on that bandwagon. When chastized for their brutal treatment of miners, they sanctimoniously pointed out to their critics that the miners were only "ignorant, lawless and savage South European peasants." But the triumph of the coal companies' imported labor plan backfired as more and more "scabs," finding working conditions as intolerable as did black-listed miners, became staunch union members.

Ten thousand miners were on the move. They hitched their scrawny teams to wagons, loaded their belongings and frightened families into the wagons, and began the slow trip down the canyons toward the tent cities that had been set up on the plains at Walsenburg, Aguilar, Ludlow, Forbes, Suffield, and Starkville.

Union organization was slow. Those fenced mine camps, patrolled by guards, many of them Baldwin-Felts detectives imported from the coal fields of West Virginia, were not easy to get into if one happened to be a union organizer, a reporter, an agitator, or a do-gooder. Union organizers were fair game to be gotten rid of one way or another. A union miner was promptly fired by the company when his membership was discovered, and company guards saw to it that his family was evicted, his possessions tossed out on the street, and his departure from the camp complete and hasty.

As the year of 1911 was dwindling toward its close, a complicated spy structure was growing in the southern coal fields. Union organizers worked in the mines, where they prevailed upon their fellow workers to join the union. Company spies worked just as hard to uncover union organizers and get rid of them.

John Lawson was the United Mine Workers' leader. An impressive man, big, kindly, and intelligent, he kept his

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eyes open for likely candidates for organizers. One of his choices was Mike Livoda. Mike worked well with men, and he spoke four languages, Polish, Slavic, Russian, and English. When Lawson first approached Livoda with an offer of a full-time job as a labor organizer, Mike protested that he could do more good working as a miner.

"The moment I quit mining," he told Lawson, "the company will set their thugs on my tail!"

Lawson knew that this was true, but he felt that Mike was too valuable to waste in the mines, and he finally convinced Livoda that he should quit mining. On January 1, 1912, Mike Livoda went to work for the U.M.W.A.

Soon hundreds of miners were joining the U.M.W.A. John Lawson realized that evicted union miners and their families were going to have to have a place to live after the coal barons threw them out of the company-owned camps. A massive strike was now more a probability than a possibility, and when the strike was called, thousands of families were going to need shelter. He began renting land with union funds, and he arranged to set up tent cities out on the plains east of the mines.

When the union demands were presented to the mine owners, they called a special meeting in Colorado Springs, and in a brief session decided to ignore all of the miners' grievances. The demand that galled the coal owners the most was the one that called for recognition of the union.

THE STRIKE was called on September 23, 1913.

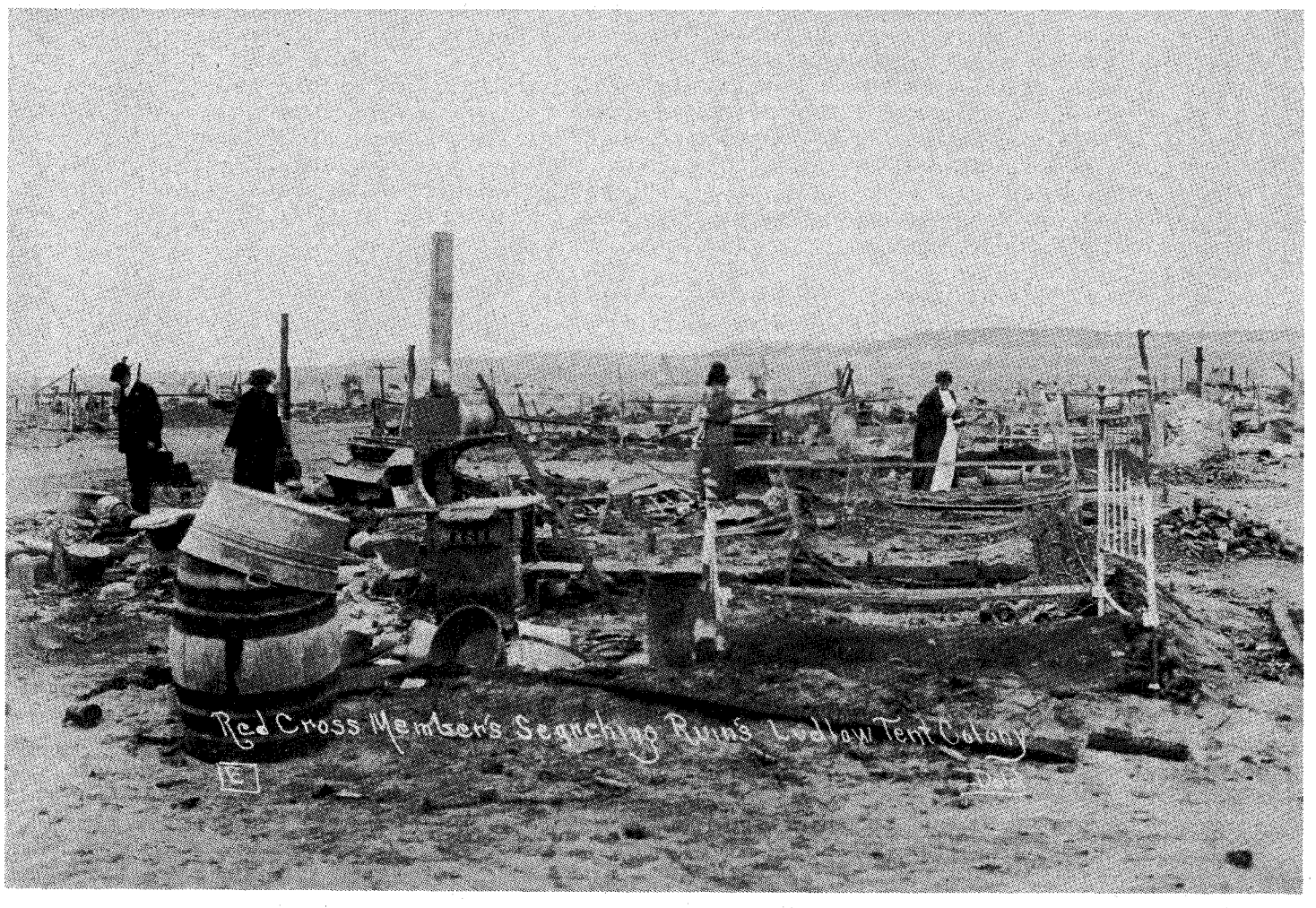
Ten thousand miners were on the move. They hitched their scrawny teams to wagons, loaded their shabby belongings and frightened families into the wagons, and began the slow trip down the canyons toward the tent cities that had been set up on the plains at Walsenburg, Aguilar, Ludlow, Forbes, Suffield, and Starkville.

Clouds boiled down over the mountains and dumped an icy, sleeting rain over the slow caravans. Horses and mules slipped and stumbled in the deep mud as they wound their way down steep grades. Miners cursed, women wept. Children, too miserable to cry, huddled in the wagons, peering out through the cold rain, their faces pinched and ghostlike in the gloom.

When the miners finally slogged into the tent colonies, they set up housekeeping under the flimsy, canvas shelters, confident that the mine owners would soon meet their demands.

The mine owners had other plans. They immediately hired more Baldwin-Felts detectives, doubled the guards around company property, and purchased large quantities of rifles and ammunition.

At the Colorado Fuel & Iron steel mills in Pueblo, Colorado, a unique armored car was built for the company. With bulletproof sides and a machine gun mounted in the back, it was soon nicknamed the "Death Special" by miners who feared the sight of the thing coming down the road. The gunmen who drove the Death Special took perverse



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. . . and after. Four men, three women, and eleven children were killed.

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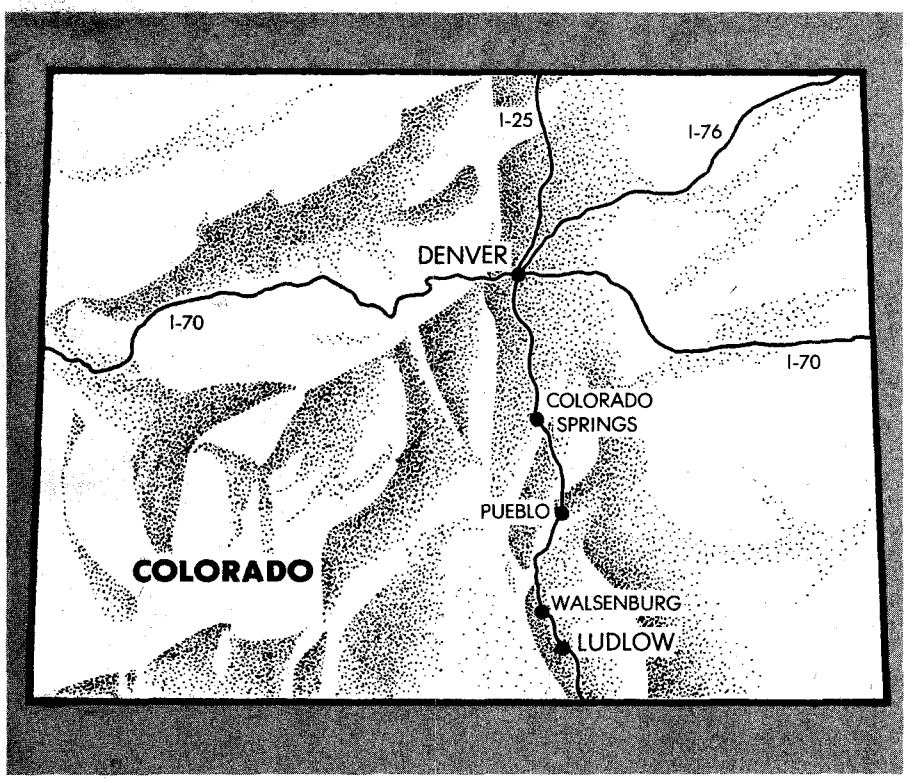

delight in spraying bullets through the tents as they roared past the colonies. At the Ludlow camp, holes were dug under the tents to protect the women and children from wild bullets. Tempers flared and smoldering hatreds festered as the miners tried to protect their families. But labor leader John Lawson was emphatic when he insisted that the strike remain peaceful.

"You have the right to defend your families," he told them, "but you must not attack."

On October 17, 1913, Baldwin-Felts detectives in the Death Special shot up the Forbes tent colony. One striker died instantly when a bullet slammed through his brain. A little boy running from the gunfire was hit time after time, and when finally carried to safety, nine bullet holes were found in his legs. A small girl walking home from school was shot in the face, and one tent was found to have almost one hundred bullet holes in it. The tent was shipped east, where it was put on display to try to show the outside world what was going on in Colorado.

Random gun battles were breaking out with increasing regularity all up and down the southern coal fields, and the danger of open warfare seemed imminent.

On October 28, 1913, Governor Ammons called out the National Guard of Colorado. When he issued the orders to move troops into the coal fields, it was agreed that the militia would be impartial and that company guards and gunmen would not be enlisted.

At first those terms were adhered to, but as members of the regular National Guard grew tired of the long, drawn-out tour of duty and asked to be replaced, more and more coal company gunmen began appearing in uniform. "These thugs," Mike Livoda explained years later, "were drawing double paychecks, one from the National Guard and the other from the coal companies that hired them. The three big coal companies in the southern fields at that time were the CF&I, the Victor American Fuel Company, and the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company."

The miners were frightened by this development, but they settled into the colonies for the winter, and an ominous calm spread over the land as federal investigations began.

Heavy snow piled up in the streets of the tent cities. Hunger was an unwelcome guest in many of the flimsy homes, although the men hunted daily and added rabbit or deer to the menu when they were lucky. The canvas shelters were cold and often wet. During one mid-winter storm, dozens of tents were blown apart at Ludlow and had to be replaced.

An uneasy peace lasted through the winter months. By spring the deceptive serenity encouraged the governor to withdraw all but a few of the troops. The financial burden of maintaining martial law was making sizeable dents in the state budget. On April 14, 1914, all but two of the troops—Company A, a cavalry outfit, and Troop B—left the field.

THE TWO remaining units were composed mostly of company men, mine guards, and gunmen. One military camp was situated west of the Ludlow tent colony, which contained 178 tents and sheltered 900 men, women, and children. The colony and the military camp were located eighteen miles north of Trinidad on a direct road to Walsenburg.

The militia had mounted machine guns at strategic points around the Ludlow camp. The soldiers who replaced National Guardsmen were heavily armed, aggressive, and nurturing the idea that they might "show those damned rednecks who was boss."

April 19, 1914, was a Sunday. It was also the Greek Easter. The miners and their families were soaking up the spring sunshine as only those who have spent a cold winter in a tent can.

Greek leader of the Ludlow camp Louis Tikas smiled as he watched children playing tag in the warm sun. There were few pleasant diversions in his life now. The warm weather was making the miners restless, and their hunting trips were locating too many rabbits suspiciously close to the military camp these days. The soldiers, on the other hand, were growing extremely casual when out on target practice; plenty of bullets had been winging toward the Ludlow tents during the past week.

Tikas lifted his gaze toward the military camp, where the soldiers seemed unduly active for a Sunday morning. Many men were clustered

Louis Tikas looked at the bedlam around him: women and children terror-stricken, dogs and chickens running wildly up and down the streets, bullets whining through the air. Grimly, he tied a white flag to a crooked branch and ran across the open prairie toward the military camp to try to call a truce.

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around the machine gun mounted on Water Tank Hill. Louis was afraid of that gun.

A freight train rumbled up to the Ludlow depot. Tikas saw three men jump from an empty boxcar and walk toward the colony. Friend or foe? He moved closer to have a better look.

Friends. John Surisky and two companions, Billy Galinsky and Sam Irons, had hopped the train earlier that morning and ridden south to Ludlow to take part in the festivities scheduled for that afternoon.

John Surisky later recalled, "we hopped the freight at Main and Monson and rode to Ludlow that Sunday, so we could play baseball. I remember, I was playing second base that afternoon."

The ball game was almost over when five soldiers armed with high-powered rifles rode into camp on horseback.

"THEY STAYED around a while," said Mr. Surisky, "insulting the women and trying to start a fight. Nothing happened that day, but the next morning the shooting began."

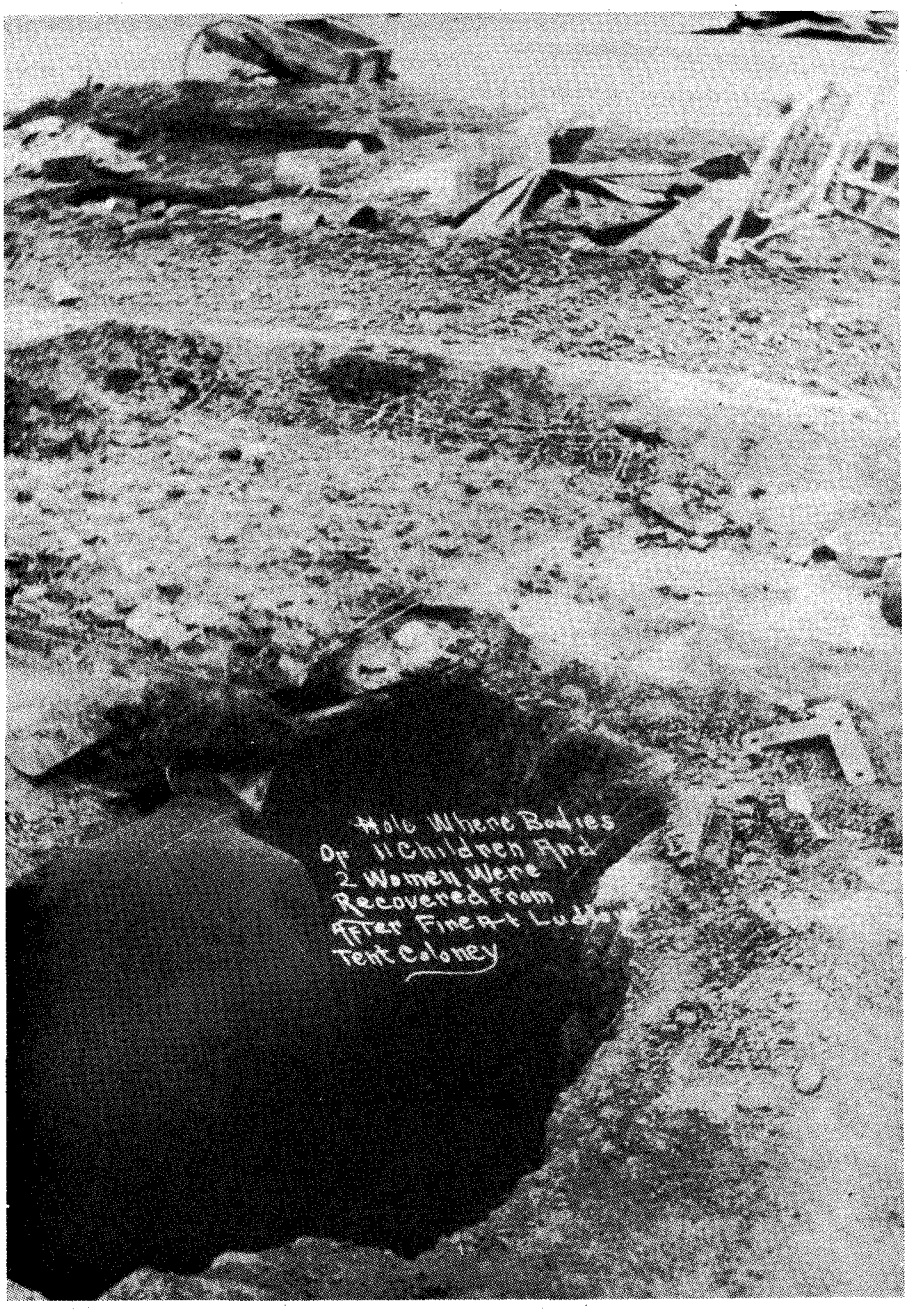
The next day, Monday, April 20, at 9:55 a.m. the first in a series of signal bombs went off in the military camp. At 10:00 a.m. a second bomb exploded, and a few seconds later the third bomb went off. Suddenly, bullets began ripping through the tents. Screaming women and children ran for their lives. Men cursed and reached for their weapons as a day of horror began at Ludlow.

John Surisky, knowing that the miners had to have help to survive, ran toward the railroad tracks and headed south toward Trinidad as fast as he could go on foot.

Louis Tikas looked at the bedlam around him: women and children terror-stricken, dogs and chickens running wildly up and down the streets, bullets whining through the air. Grimly, he tied a white flag to a crooked branch, and against the better judgment of his friends, he ran across the open prairie toward the military camp to try to call a truce long enough to let the miners get the women and children out of Ludlow and up to the white schoolhouse about a mile east of camp.

Louis Tikas never returned. Later it was learned that he had been clubbed and shot to death at the military camp.

Pretty, red-haired Mary Thomas, wife of a Welsh coal miner, had endured the long, bitter winter at Ludlow, where she and her children spent most of the time huddled in bed trying to keep warm. Louis Tikas had elected her head of the entertainment group at Ludlow because



Frank Palmer Collection

The Black Hole at Ludlow after the massacre.

she had a lovely voice and had been trained to sing opera. She helped lighten many a dreary day during the winter by singing for the miners and their families. She would sing opera for them until she got tired of opera, and then she would sing their union song, "Union Forever."

When the shooting started, Mary Thomas saw the people run from their tents shouting for children and screaming, "run for the hills!" The grounds looked like an ant hill as people scurried out of the tents and tried to find a safe place to hide from the gunfire.

Mary rounded up a group of women and children and led them down near the railroad tracks, where there was a deep well with three trestles in it. They put the children, most of them babies or toddlers under six years old, down on a trestle above the water in the well where they were warm and safe. The children were frightened, crying, and hungry, so Mrs. Thomas crawled to the house of a railroad man and his wife, who gathered a supply of food and helped her take it back to the well.

Mary Thomas and the children in the well lived through that dreadful day at Ludlow, but others were not so lucky. As darkness fell on the stricken tent city, soldiers ran into camp and set fire to the tents.

As Mary watched the flames spread, she stood in her dirty gingham dress with tears running down her face and

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"The state of Colorado through its military arm was rendered helpless to maintain law and order because that military arm acted, not as an agent of the commonwealth, but as an agent of one of the parties in interest, as an agent, that is, of the coal operators, as against the strikers."

Author's Photo

Despite the monument to the victims of the Ludlow Massacre erected by the UMWA, it is difficult for visitors to imagine the horrors of that day long ago.

thought, "This dress is all I own. We have nothing, no homes, nothing."

Then she thought she heard children screaming. She raced to the well to check, and she was relieved to find that the children there were all right. A miner who was standing beside her, watching the tents go up in flames, thought that what she heard was just the drunken soldiers yelling, "mission accomplished!"

Mary Thomas was to find out later that it was, indeed, the sound of women and children screaming that she had heard, though not the ones she had helped to safety in the well.

Mike Livoda was in Trinidad when the massacre began at Ludlow.

"John Lawson and union organizer, Pete Gorman, and I took off immediately when we got the call, and we proceeded to Ludlow," he recalled in 1972. "The fight was still going on, and we had a hard time to get to Ludlow because machine guns surrounded the camp. We tried to save the people."

He paused a long time. "You get so kinda nervous, and excited little bit, you know, and don't know what to do."

They moved all of the women and children into an arroyo, where they were protected from bullets and could make their way east toward wooded slopes known as the Black Hills. In the cover of the trees there, Mike Livoda helped them set up temporary camps.

Not until Wednesday, forty-eight hours after the shooting, did the militia allow Red Cross nurses, doctors, and undertakers into the charred shambles of the Ludlow tent colony.

When rescuers finally brought the bodies out of the blackened colony, the death toll included four men, three women, and eleven children. From the large dugout under one tent, the bodies of thirteen women and children were recovered. This dugout was soon christened "The Black Hole of Ludlow," and a monument was placed near the hole.

In the days that followed the shooting there was no sense of victory for the miners, only the sorrow of funerals to be held in Trinidad.

The bodies of the dead had been taken to a mortuary in Trinidad to be prepared for burial. But before the funerals could take place, a mysterious fire broke out in the mortuary, and the bodies had to be hauled out into the street to save them while the fire was put out. The cause of the fire was never discovered, but it was whispered that perhaps someone wanted the evidence of the bodies destroyed before the shame of the massacre reached out and touched too

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many persons in influential positions.

The miners had other things to think about. The funerals must be arranged, the ravaged tent colony must be rebuilt, and through it all, the men had to live with the haunting knowledge that they had lost the strike.

The coal companies were quick to issue statements charging the miners with starting the fight at Ludlow. They maintained that the fire that destroyed the tents was started by an overturned stove, and that the miners themselves suffocated the women and children in the Black Hole by placing mattresses over them to protect them, thereby cutting off their air supply. They blamed "cheap professors, even cheaper muckraking magazines and a lot of milk and water preachers" for magnifying the story of the massacre and making a mountain out of a molehill with the whole issue.

However, investigation of the massacre made by the United States Commission of Industrial Relations, a body appointed by President Woodrow Wilson, included the statement, "The State of Colorado through its military arm was rendered helpless to maintain law and order because that military arm acted, not as an agent of the commonwealth, but as an agent of one of the parties in interest, as an agent, that is, of the coal operators, as against the strikers."

The Ludlow Massacre did help to reveal to the public the plight of coal miners, and an immediate outcry arose from indignant citizens across the nation. Yet it took years for the union to gain recognition. Coal companies continued to ignore mining laws, and more blood was destined to be shed in the coal fields of Colorado, but that would be a different time and a different place.

Today, Ludlow is simply a peaceful landscape. The handsome, well-kept monument and the ghost town of Ludlow are quiet under the noonday sun, making it hard for the visitor to imagine what it was like on these plains during the troubled years of 1913 and 1914.

The surrounding hills are full of old mine structures, coke ovens, cement buildings, and lonely coal camp sites. There is a strong lure and fascination connected with any ghost town, and these lonely canyons and deserted plains are no exception. It would be a mistake, however, to visit the southern coal fields and the Ludlow monument and not remember that this is, indeed, the ghost with a dark memory.

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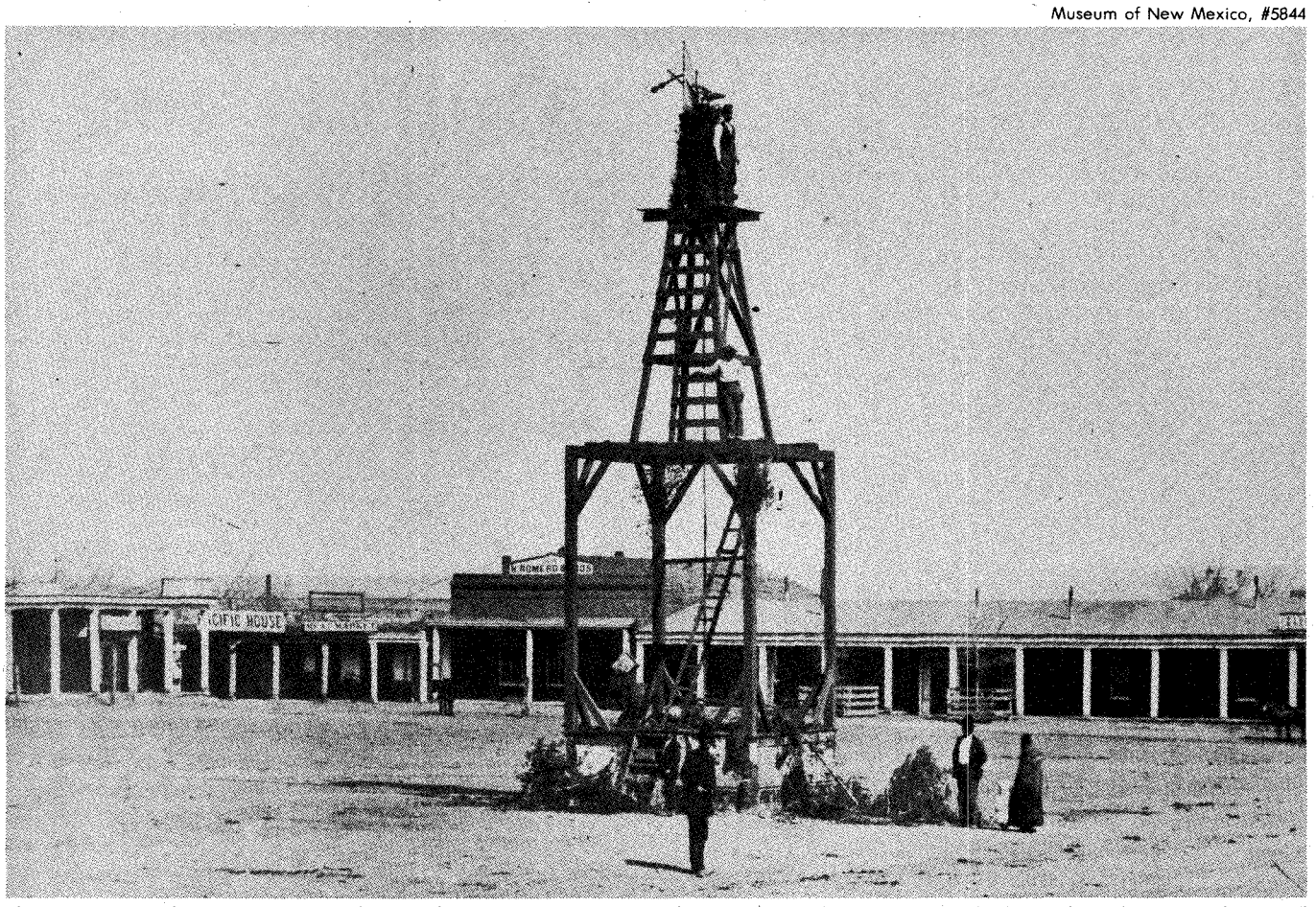

The Las Vegas Plaza, circa 1878. The windmill at its center provided a handy platform from which lynch mobs hanged several undesirables in the early 1880s. It had been torn down by the time Baker was hanged.

The Man Who Was Hanged Twice

By ROBERT J. TORREZ

On May 6, 1887, Theodore Baker was hanged at Las Vegas, New Mexico, for the December 14, 1885, murder of Frank Unruh in nearby Colfax County. In and of itself, the hanging was unspectacular and fairly typical of the several dozen executions which took place in territorial New Mexico between 1846 and 1912. What distinguished this hanging is that Theodore Baker had been hanged for this crime once before.

Colfax County in northeast New Mexico was a rough and tumble place in the 1880s. Established by the New Mexico Territorial Legislature during its 1869–70 session, Colfax County was named after Schuyler Colfax, the vice-president of the United States under Ulysses S. Grant. Lincoln County had also just been formed and named in memory of the recently assassinated president. The year before, President Grant himself had been honored when Grant County was established in southwest New Mexico. It was sound politics to give these new counties appealing names.

Colfax County was also an area which always seemed just beyond the limits of effective law enforcement. Its goldfields, vast ranches, and proximity to the Santa Fe Trail attracted many men who saw its potential and went there to settle and make their fortunes. As was the case in most frontier regions, many others sought to make their fortunes at the point of a gun. It took nearly two decades for Colfax County to begin overcoming its frontier lawlessness.

By 1885, most of New Mexico was trying desperately to put its "Wild West" days behind it and plunge headlong into the business of agricultural and economic development. It was into this changing but still dangerous frontier that Frank Unruh, a "well-to-do" surveyor and farmer, moved in the summer of 1885. With his wife, Kate, and three-year-old son, they established a ranch in southern Colfax County. Later that same summer, during a visit to Springer, the Colfax County seat, Unruh bumped into Theodore Baker, a

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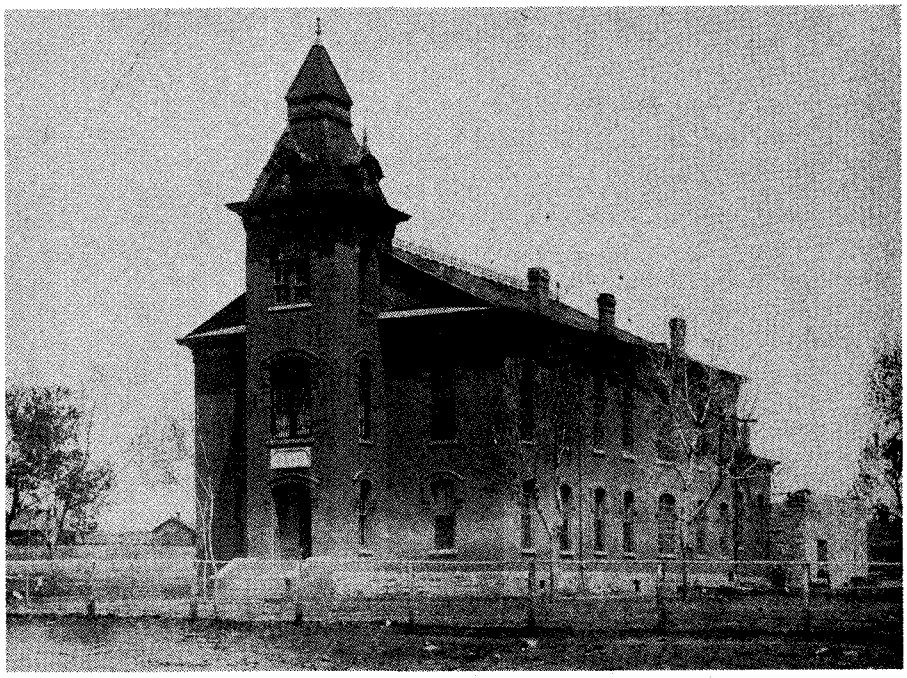
drifter with whom he had made an acquaintance several years before in Arizona. Unruh and Baker quickly resumed their friendship, and Unruh invited Baker to stay at his home and offered to assist him in selecting and establishing a homestead. It was a fateful invitation which Baker quickly accepted.

Unruh was frequently away on surveying jobs, and it appears Baker made himself at home in the Unruh household during his absences. He began by telling Mrs. Unruh stories about women Frank Unruh had known when they were in Arizona. He convinced her Unruh was "cordially hated" by everyone in the county and frequently told her she was "too good a woman" for her husband. After two months of persistent "personal attentions," a "criminal intimacy" developed between Baker and Kate Unruh. The lovers quietly hatched a plan for Mrs. Unruh to divorce her husband and marry Baker.



Museum of New Mexico, #112261

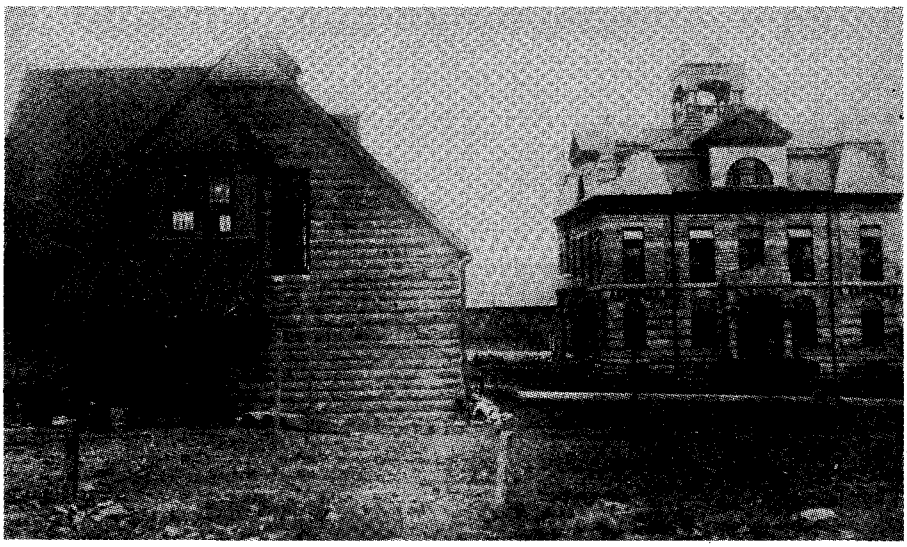
The Colfax County Courthouse at Springer, New Mexico. Springer was the county seat from 1882 to 1897. The building is now a museum.

Eventually, Unruh became suspicious and on several occasions confronted the couple. Amazingly, Unruh did nothing to even suggest that Baker leave their home. Finally, the evening of December 14, 1885, after Baker had lived in the house several months, Unruh overheard the lovers whispering to each other and an argument ensued. Baker left the house and Unruh retreated into his cellar where he opened a bottle of wine and got gloriously drunk. Fearing "serious trouble," Mrs. Unruh went to their bedroom, where Unruh kept his gun belt, removed his revolver from its holster, and hid it under their bed. Soon after, Baker returned to the house and asked Mrs. Unruh to give him Unruh's revolver. She brought the gun out from under the bed and gave it to Baker. Baker then took it into his bedroom and placed it next to his own revolver.

Later that evening, Baker went outside to get Unruh, who was still in the cellar, and bring him to the house for supper. When they sat down at the table, Unruh, who was still drunk, began arguing with Baker and his wife. Baker rose from the table and turned toward his bedroom just as Unruh loudly threatened to cut Baker's heart out and "hang it on a pole." Baker turned and asked Unruh if his remarks were meant for him. Unruh sprang from the table and grappled with Baker. They wrestled momentarily and fell into Baker's room, where the struggle continued briefly. Then a shot rang out. "My God, Kate, I am shot," exclaimed Unruh, followed by a second shot. Unruh stumbled from the house, leaving a trail of blood.

Baker, his revolver in hand, followed Unruh to the door, but turned back and retreived Unruh's revolver, which he had hidden in his room. A revolver in each hand, he dashed out of the house in search of his victim. Unruh had managed to escape only a few hundred feet from the house. Baker found him where he had fallen, and proceeded to shoot him three more times, once in the head. He then returned to the house and informed Kate her husband was dead. She nervously asked him if he was sure Unruh was dead and suggested he cover the body. Baker returned with a blanket to where he had left Unruh. Two more shots rang out in the cold night.

Baker then instructed Mrs. Unruh to clean up any blood that was on the floor of the house. In the meantime, he hitched up a team to a light wagon, and together they drove to a neighbor's ranch. On their way, Baker adamantly told Kate she should deny any shots were fired inside the house and that he intended to plead self-defense because Unruh had a table knife in his hand when they grappled in the kitchen. After they arrived at the neighbor's ranch, a small party was sent to retreive Unruh's body. A hastily convened coro-



Museum of New Mexico, #14721

San Miguel County jail at left, county courthouse at right, circa 1885.

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ner's inquest concluded that the many bullet holes they found in the body belied Baker's claim of self-defense and ruled that Unruh had been murdered. Baker was arrested the following day and placed in the county jail at Springer.

The next night, a "mob of outraged citizens" forced their way into the jail, removed Baker from his cell, slipped a noose around his neck, and hoisted him up a nearby telegraph pole. The vigilantes left him for dead, but a sheriff's posse found him hanging there a few moments later and cut him down. To the posse's astonishment, Baker showed signs of life, and help was summoned to try to revive him. After a few hours, Baker was deemed well enough to travel, and the following day, he was placed aboard a train and transferred to the territorial penitentiary in Santa Fe for safekeeping.

While he was in jail at Santa Fe, Baker granted a newspaper interview in which he described his harrowing experience. "I went with them, and at the jail door I began to curse them, when one of them put the muzzle of his pistol to my ear and said: 'keep still or I'll put a bullet through you.' I knew him by his voice, and knew he would do it, and I kept still. A little further on we came to a telegraph pole. From the crossbar swung a new rope. On the end was a big slipnoose. They led me under the rope. I tried to stoop down and pull my boots off, as I had promised my folks not to die with my boots on, but before I could do it the noose was thrown over my head and I was jerked off my feet. My senses left me for a moment, and then I waked up in what seemed to be another world. As I recollect now, the sensation was that everything about me had been multiplied a great many times. It seemed that my five executioners had grown in number until there were thousands of them. I saw what seemed to be a multitude of animals of all shapes and sizes.

"Then things changed and I was in great pain. I became conscious that I was hanging by the neck, and that the knot of the rope had slipped under my chin. My hands were loosely tied, and I jerked them loose and tried to catch the rope above me. Somebody caught me by the feet just then and gave me a jerk. It seemed like a bright flash of lightning passed in front of my eyes. It was the brightest thing I ever saw. It was followed by a terrible pain up and down and across my back and I could feel my legs jerk and draw up. Then there was a blank, and I knew nothing more until 11 o'clock the next day."

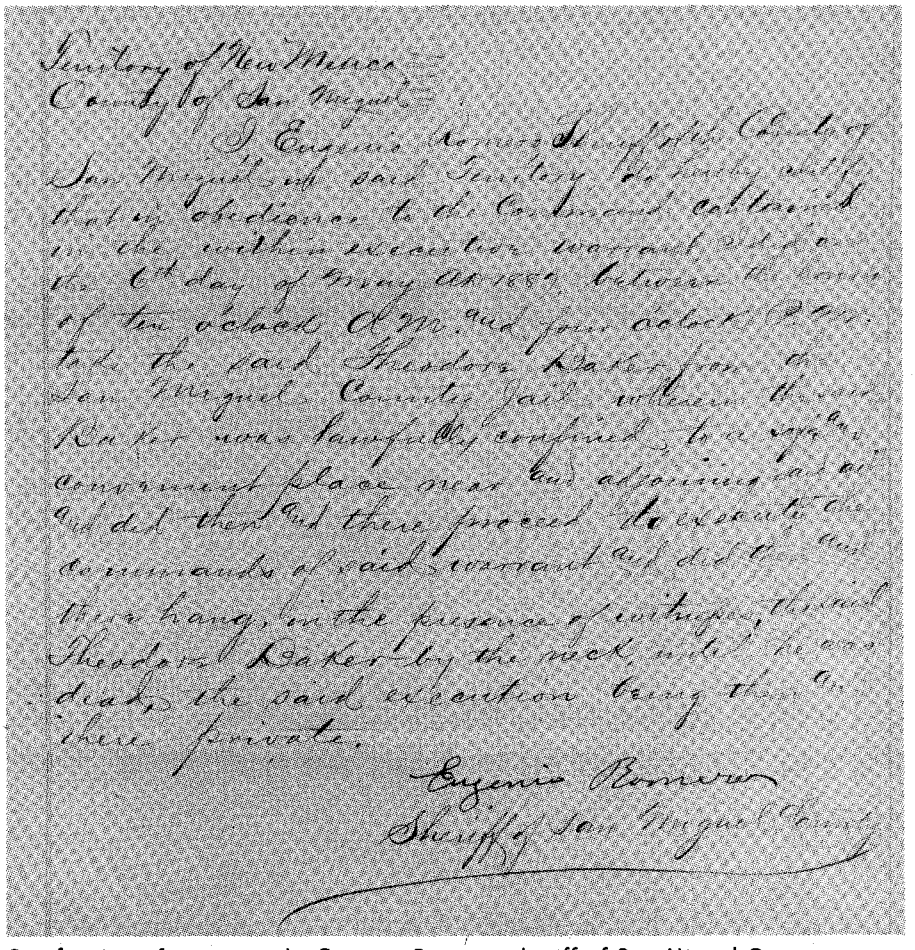
During the following weeks of his incarceration, Baker complained of severe back pain, double vision, and several other maladies which he attributed to the aftereffects of his premature brush with the hangman.

Baker remained in Santa Fe until his trial, which was held in San Miguel County on a change of venue. Mrs. Unruh, who had also been indicted in the murder of her husband, turned state's evidence and charges against her were dropped. Observers noted that it was her testimony which sealed Baker's fate. The jury returned a verdict of guilty of first degree murder and Baker was sentenced to hang. After an appeal to the New Mexico Supreme Court, Baker's conviction was upheld and the sentence of death by hanging affirmed. His execution was scheduled for May 6, 1887.

We will probably never know what really happened at the Unruh ranch during those months prior to Frank Unruh's murder. The version described above is based principally on the testimony provided by Kate Unruh and by others who witnessed only the aftermath of the shooting. Theodore Baker and Kate were the only two witnesses who really knew what happened, and Baker's version differed considerably from Kate's.

Throughout the trial, Baker denied he had killed Unruh, and in a statement made to a reporter for the Las Vegas *Daily Optic*, admitted struggling with Unruh and shooting him in self-defense. He insisted, however, that Kate herself fired the shots which killed her husband, and he had agreed to say he had killed Unruh in order to protect her. Baker also admitted having "carnal commerce" with Kate, but denied he seduced her. Baker described the Unruhs as having a very unhappy marriage, and claimed that during one of Frank's many lengthy absences from the home, Kate had "showed herself to my view perfectly naked, asking me what I thought of that for a form." Later that night, she had come to his bed, and "inclination and opportunity proved to [sic] strong for [his] sence [sic] of right." Their affair continued for a month, when according to Baker, he found her in bed

Governor Edmund G. Ross Papers, Penal Papers—Death Warrants, State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico.


Territory of New Mexico
County of San Miguel

I Eugenio Romero Sheriff of the County of San Miguel in said Territory do hereby certify that in obedience to the Command contained in the within execution warrant, rec'd on the 6th day of May AD 1887, between the hours of ten o'clock A.M. and four o'clock P.M. take the said Theodore Baker from the San Miguel County Jail wherein the said Baker was lawfully confined to a safe and convenient place near and adjoining said jail and did then and there proceed to execute the commands of said warrant and did then and there hang, in the presence of witnesses, the said Theodore Baker by the neck, until he was dead, the said execution being then and there private.

Eugenio Romero
Sheriff of San Miguel County

Certification of execution by Eugenio Romero, sheriff of San Miguel County.

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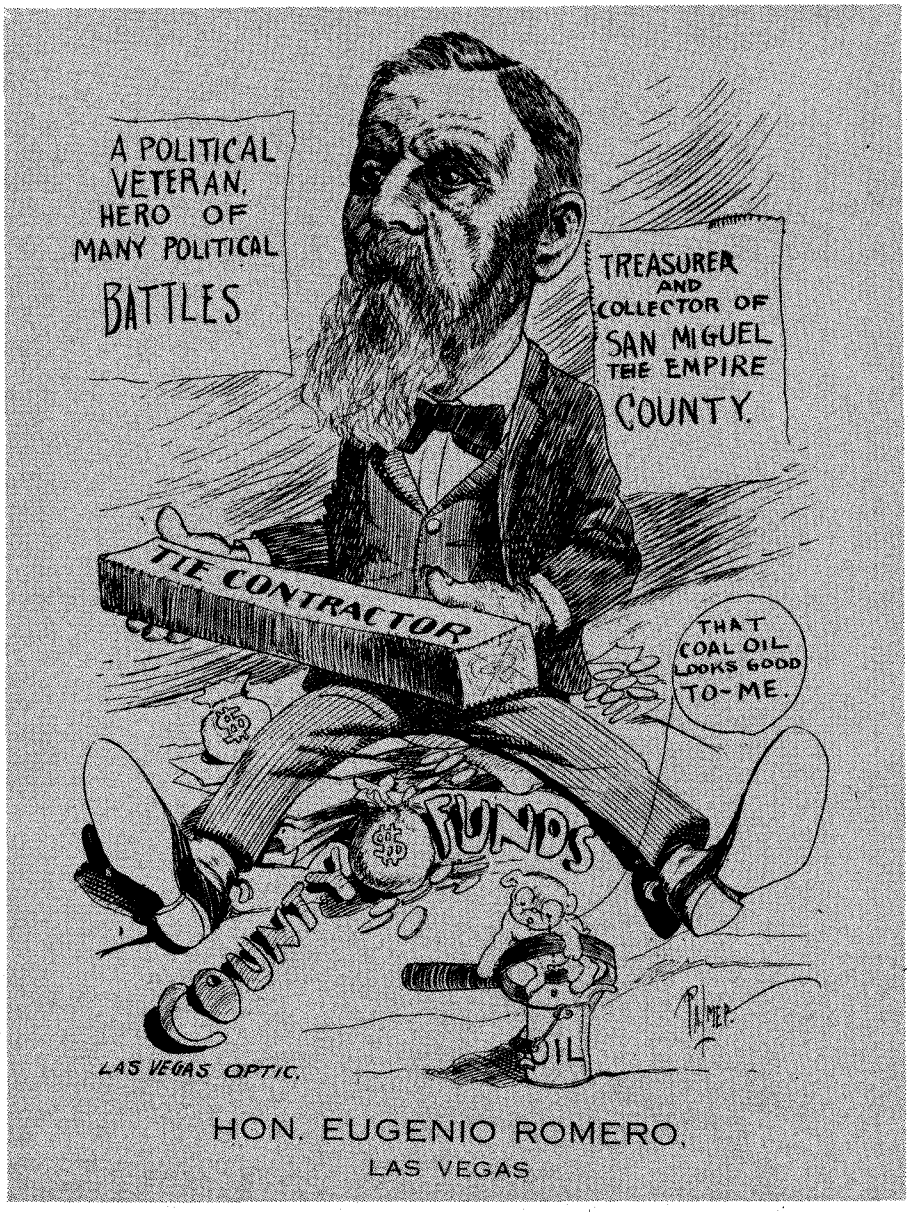
with another man, whom he indentified as one of the leaders of the mob which had lynched him—the one who had held the gun to his ear.

Probably the most damaging evidence aside from Kate's testimony was a letter signed "Dorie," which Baker purportedly wrote to Kate from Santa Fe while he was being held at the territorial penitentiary for safekeeping. In the letter, Baker appears to ask Kate to change the testimony she had given at the hearing in Springer. "For God's sake, Kate," he pleaded, "save my life." The letter proceeded to outline what she should say, and expressed confidence that if she changed her story just a little, he would get off on the plea for self-defense. Once cleared, he boasted, he would bring suit against Governor Edmund G. Ross for false imprisonment.

Despite Baker's stern warning to destroy the letter and not to let anyone, "not even your best friend," know he had written, the letter ended up as evidence at his trial and was even published in the *Daily Optic*. The paper pointed out the letter's "peculiar and suspicious language" which proved a conspiracy between Baker and Mrs. Unruh. Baker denied he had written the letter, but witnesses at the trial confirmed the handwriting appeared to be his, and Kate herself testified that "Dorie" was a pet name she used for him. Baker's fate was sealed. As Judge Elisha V. Long pointed out as he imposed the death sentence on Baker, he had been portrayed as one who betrayed the trust of a friend in order to possess his wife and property. "What a spectacle!" exhorted Judge Long. "A woman dishonored, her paramour in the very presence of the husband, aware of his humiliations, and that husband, by the wife's procurement, disarmed and powerless, in his own home, converted by your act into a house for his enemies, the darkness of night approaching, with secret whisperings and consultations between you and your paramour, under the observation of the wronged man. It was a condition to invite murder."

At about 3:20 in the afternoon of May 6, 1887, Theodore Baker was escorted from the San Miguel County jail to the scaffold which had been constructed in the jail yard. In keeping with Judge Long's instructions to avoid making this a public spectacle, a wooden fence about twenty feet high and seventy-five feet square enclosed the gallows. Some sixty witnesses, consisting of law enforcement officials, six doctors, several ministers, Baker's attorney, four newspapermen, and various other dignitaries, were allowed into the enclosure. About two hundred others gathered on the outside. San Miguel County Sheriff Eugenio Romero, his deputy, the hangman, Baker, and the Rev. Boone Keeton mounted the scaffold. The death warrant was read to Baker, who was allowed to speak for almost a half hour, at which time a black hood was slipped over his head and a rope placed around his neck. "Gentlemen, I am sorry it ends this way," concluded Baker. "Let her go." The trap was sprung, and Baker dropped, his neck mercifully broken by the fall. Shortly after four o'clock, his pulse ceased and after being allowed to hang about twenty minutes, his body was cut down and buried in a plain coffin furnished by the county. Theodore Baker did not escape this second brush with the hangman.



Museum of New Mexico, #7816

Eugenio Romero, the San Miguel County sheriff who hanged Theodore Baker, had a long and multifaceted career. This early twentieth century cartoon satirized his many enterprises.

Not much is known about what became of Kate Unruh. A newspaper article of the time reported she had returned to her native Pennsylvania, where she remained, according to their information, "in a demented condition of mind." There is no mention of Unruh's young son.

With Kate insane and Baker dead, we will never know what really happened at the Unruh ranch the night of December 14, 1885. We know three lives came tragically to an end, three lives whose actions and motives will be known, as the Las Vegas *Daily Optic* so aptly put it, "only in that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed."

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The Mystery of Santa Clara Valley

Part Two—The Killer Escapes

In Part I, ne'er-do-well James Dunham killed his wife, three in-laws, and two others in a bloody rampage. The object of a massive manhunt, he fled into California's Diablo Range, where he met Everett Snell and Oscar Parker. Snell, who recognized Dunham, went to notify the authorities, leaving the unsuspecting Parker alone with the fugitive.

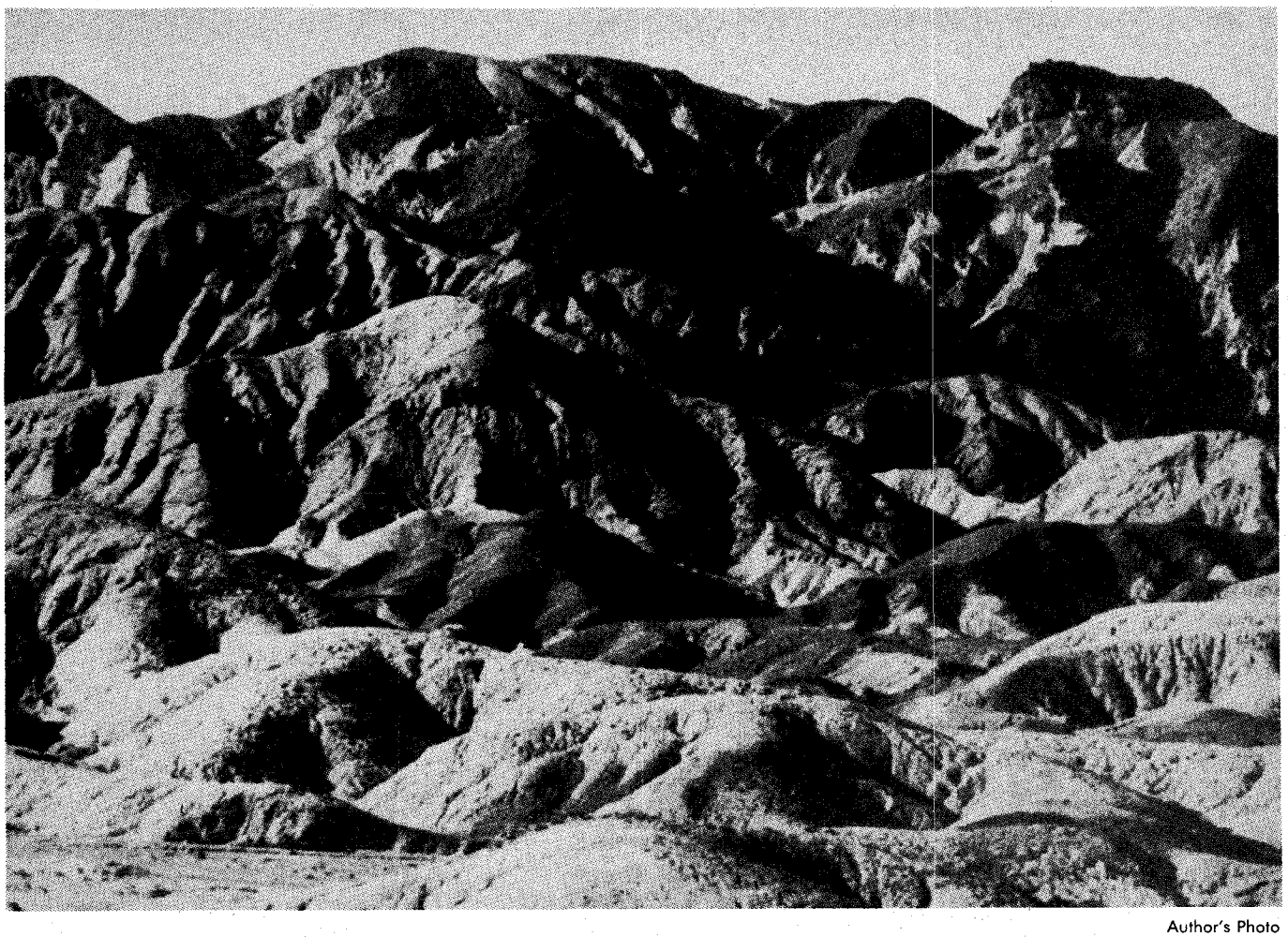
After Snell left, Parker, still unaware that he was talking to a man who had recently killed six people, induced Dunham to stay the night at his ranch cabin. They reached the cabin and Dunham unsaddled his horse, but after talking a while with Parker, he told his host that he had changed his mind and would cross the mountains that night. With that, he left.

By GARY MEIER

When Sheriff Lyndon received word that Dunham had been sighted on Mount Hamilton, he gathered twenty-five men, many of whom were already fatigued from checking the west hills, and rode up the mountain. Following the posse was an entourage of gun-toting citizens and a number of newspaper correspondents.

The sheriff and his men reached the area by midnight and set up headquarters at the Smith's Creek Hotel. A search was made along the road to the top of the mountain, and guards were posted at intervals to await daylight. Nothing was seen or heard of the fugitive that night.

Among the lawmen was Sheriff Ballou of San Luis Obispo County, to the south, who had brought his two prized bloodhounds by train to the McGlincy farm the day before. The dogs



Author's Photo

High, rocky ridges and peaks formed a protective barrier around famed Cantua Canyon, where lawmen feared James Dunham might try to hide.

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had a reputation for tracking men on trails twenty-four hours old, but not a fugitive on horseback. The two sheriffs thought that because Dunham's horse was exhausted he would probably hide in a brushy gulch and head out on foot at first light, leaving a trail for the dogs.

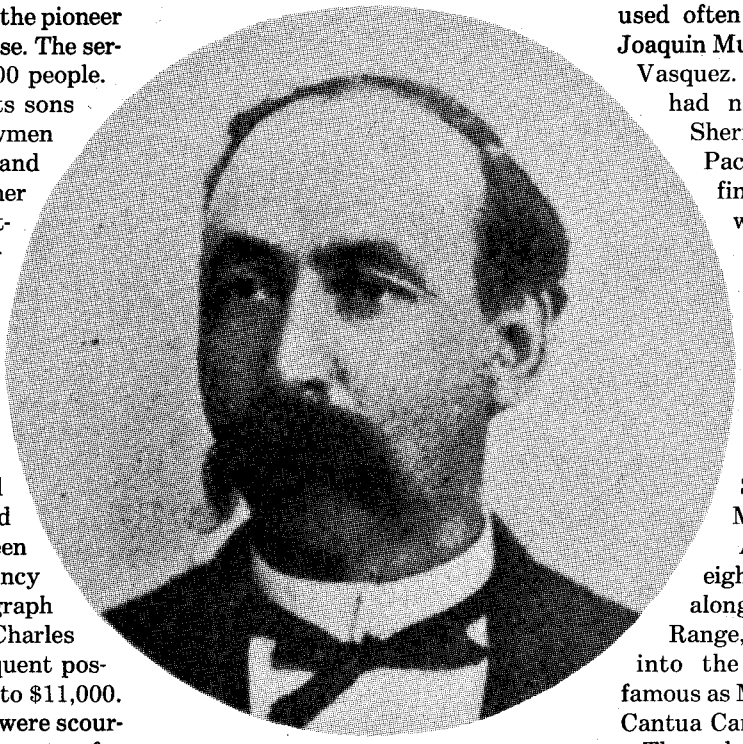
By mid-morning on the twenty-ninth, over 300 armed men were on the lookout for James Dunham. Also on that day, the six victims of Dunham's fiendish rampage were laid to rest at the pioneer Oak Hill Cemetery in San Jose. The services were attended by 5,000 people.

An enraged valley sent its sons and fathers to assist the lawmen in tracking down the killer, and by sundown that day another hundred volunteers were scattered through the mountains. Meanwhile, a poster offering one thousand dollars for James Dunham, dead or alive, had been made up by Sheriff Lyndon and sent to all western states and territories. For a picture of the killer, he used the tintype of James and Hattie Dunham that had been left behind in the McGlincy home. Later, another photograph was supplied by a brother, Charles Dunham, for use on subsequent posters. The reward soon grew to $11,000.

Though hundreds of men were scouring the Mount Hamilton country for James Dunham, the pursuit was not going well. The mountainous region was exceedingly difficult. Deep, narrow gorges filled with thick brush made difficult going for the mounted hunters, and reports from people who knew Dunham indicated he was much more familiar with the Diablo terrain than was first thought. To make a tough situation worse, on the afternoon of May 29 a thick, pea soup fog settled over the mountains, effectively halting the day's manhunt and leaving many of the trackers disoriented.

At ten o'clock the next morning the lawmen got a break. Oscar Parker found Dunham's buckskin mare abandoned in Indian Gulch, about five miles from the Smith's Creek Hotel. Howard Buffington, a McGlincy neighbor, indentified the horse as "Honey," an animal he had known for years. When he said, "Hello, Honey," the mare stretched to her halter's length to greet him.

It was not known whether Dunham had found another horse, but the lawmen considered it unlikely. Still, there were a few remote mountain ranches where a horse could be stolen undetected. The officers' discussions of the situation were further complicated when someone reported what sounded like a single gunshot some distance down Indian Gulch. Thirty men quickly descended into the steep gorge and spread out, almost touching hands. The hopeful theory that Dunham might have committed suicide was discarded when every foot of the gulch had been searched twice and no body found. The officers were of the opinion that the shot had been fired by one of the many armed men scattered on the mountainside.



Author's Photo

Sheriff J.H. Lyndon of Santa Clara County led the massive manhunt for James Dunham.

The consensus was that the fleeing outlaw was afoot until he could secure a horse. They believed that he had pressed on hard after meeting Snell and Parker, realizing the area would probably be surrounded by men the next day.

From the place where the horse was found, there were a number of possible routes out of the mountains. Eastward lay the backbone of the Diablo Range, a succession of deep canyons and ridges, beyond which was the broad San Joaquin Valley of central California. The canyons in that direction were rocky and steep with dense timber at the lower elevations.

To the south lay Pacheco Pass, the low east-west route over the mountains used often in early outlaw years by Joaquin Murrieta and later by Tiburcio Vasquez. That part of the country had not yet been searched by Sheriff Lyndon's men. Along Pacheco Pass, Dunham could find a fresh horse and cabins where he could get food.

Another possibility for the fugitive would be to come down out of the mountains toward the southern end of the Santa Clara Valley, south of the town of Gilroy. From there he could strike the old trail into Southern California and Mexico.

Also to the south, about eighty miles distant, if he stayed along the foothills of the Diablo Range, Dunham could disappear into the vast fortress that was famous as Murrieta's longtime hideout, Cantua Canyon.

Through the thirtieth and thirty-first of May, the scattered groups of searchers continued to comb the mountains, tantalized by reports of cabins broken into and food stolen. At 4:00 p.m. on the thirty-first, a hard-riding young mountain girl reported to Sheriff Lyndon at the Smith's Creek Hotel that she and her father had found strange bootprints in the sand along Ysabel Creek, fifteen miles to the southeast. Sheriffs Lyndon and Ballou, with a party of men, hurried to the site over rough trails.

The bootprints matched the peculiar shape of Dunham's tracks at the McGlincy place. But the tracks in the Ysabel Creek sand soon entered the

An enraged valley sent its sons and fathers to assist lawmen in tracking down the killer, and by sundown that day another hundred volunteers were scattered through the mountains. Meanwhile, a poster offering one thousand dollars for James Dunham, dead or alive, had been sent to all western states and territories.

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All: Author's Photos

Five of Dunham's six victims were buried in adjoining graves in San Jose's Oak Hill Cemetery. The inscription running across their markers (below) proved prophetic when Dunham escaped the vengeance of the law.

water, and Ballou's bloodhounds could not determine where they came back out. A large posse scoured the area but found no further sign.

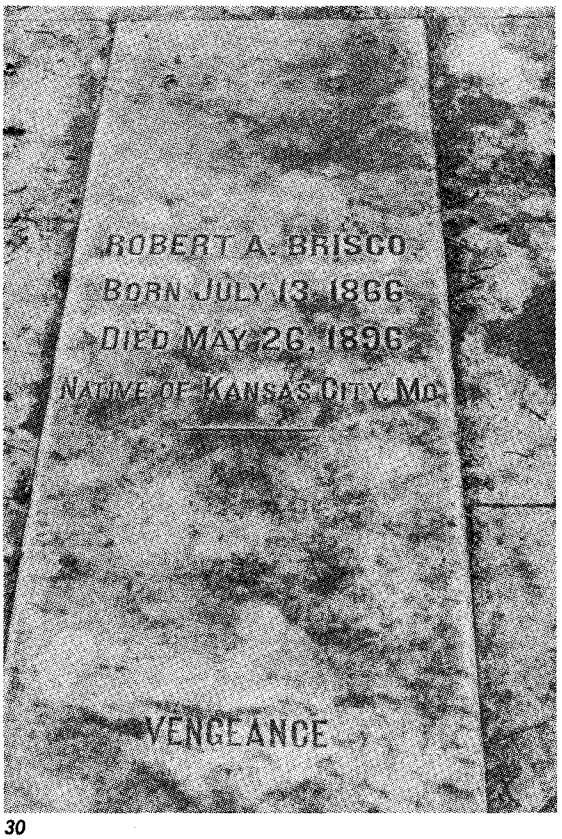
Late in the day, some distance south of the Ysabel Creek prints, some similar bootprints were found on a sandy ridge by Joseph Herring, an interesting old character known as "the human bloodhound." Herring, who lived in Los Gatos, had made a life study of trailing animals and men. Herring traced the bootprints south along the ridge into a canyon that could lead toward Pacheco Pass. The trail was lost, however, and neither the human bloodhound nor the canine variety could pick it up again.

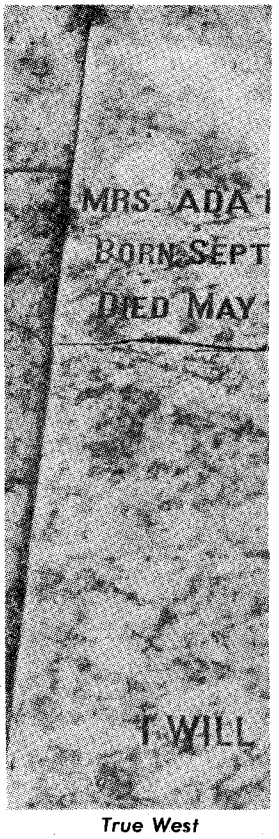
Lyndon and Ballou received word that deputies and a posse from Gilroy were heading to Pacheco Pass, and Sheriff E.E. Holbrook and a posse from San Benito County, bordering Santa Clara County on the south, were riding to that area also.

Large parties of posse men headquartered at various mountain ranches and spread out to hunt slowly and carefully. Many other armed men, independent of any official posse, camped and searched alone, their vision clouded with thoughts of the dead-or-alive reward. Some talked of lynching Dunham when he was caught—if he was caught.

When the day and evening of the thirty-first passed with no sightings of the elusive quarry, Sheriff Lyndon decided to head back to San Jose and direct the chase from his office. This was by far the biggest manhunt California had seen—an estimated 400 men were in the mountains by nightfall on the thirty-first—and Lyndon could better coordinate the hunt from San Jose.

Most of the trackers, particularly those with experience in the Diablo Mountains, believed Dunham had escaped eastward to the San Joaquin Valley or had struck south beyond the area of pursuit. Citing the large number





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of men in the field, Lyndon was still optimistic that the fugitive would soon be behind bars. He told a San Francisco *Chronicle* reporter that "no man alive can escape the net thrown up in the mountains."

Help was coming from all directions. Sheriffs and police officials from all over California were sending men to Santa Clara County to be at the disposal of Sheriff Lyndon. Harry Morse, the famed San Francisco private detective who had worked with Wells Fargo's James Hume in 1883 to catch stage robber Black Bart, contacted Lyndon to offer his services. In his earlier years, Morse had tracked bandits all through California, including the Diablo Range, and in 1871 had shot it out with the feared Juan Soto near Pacheco Pass. Sheriffs McEvoy of San Mateo County, Matthews of Monterey, and Tom Cunningham of San Joaquin County, all came to San Jose with their posses to enlist with Sheriff Lyndon.

ON THE EAST side of the mountains, Sheriff Purvis of Stanislaus County in the San Joaquin Valley was in close touch by telegraph with Lyndon; he was mounting his own massive effort from the east.

But by the end of the day on June 1, six days after the murders at the McGlincy farm, James Dunham was still at large. A combined force of 500 armed men was now looking for him.

The facts that Dunham was not in jail and that his body was not being paraded in the streets of San Jose, were outraging an already inflamed valley population. While most of the valley people lauded Sheriff Lyndon's dogged search efforts, they were also dissatisified with the lack of results. A "Committee of Safety" was organized by a number of leading businessmen and politicians, headed by the McGlincy family attorney, M.H. Hyland. He stressed that the purpose of the group was not to act as a vigilante committee but solely to raise money for a higher reward and to fund the hiring of Pinkerton detectives. At one point the committee attempted to raise a reward of $50,000, but contributions amounted to only $11,000, still a high sum in those days.

Meanwhile, the intensive search continued. On June 2 there was new excitement when deputies Gardner and Reeves came across bootprints matching Dunham's in Pacheco Pass, thirty miles south of Mount Hamilton. One boot showed the peculiar sharp point, the other a squared toe—the same shapes found in the McGlincy's yard and at Ysabel Creek.

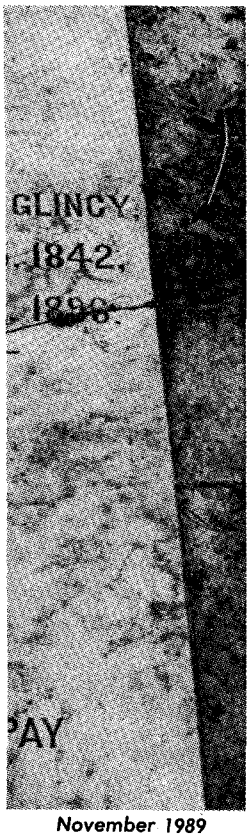
These new prints were discovered in sandy soil in the Pass and could be followed some distance. The district was already swarming with searchers, and many more were riding hard to reach the scene of the new discovery. The lawmen again stated their certainty that Dunham would not be free much longer.

The trail led south toward the dry, mountainous area of the New Idria quicksilver mines and Cantua Canyon. Sheriff Holbrook of San Benito County took charge of the search in his bailiwick, through which the new trail led.

THE PRESS of the chase became more excited when reports of actual sightings of the hard-running killer began to come in. Workers at the Mountain House, a stage stop at the summit of Pacheco Pass, told lawmen they saw Dunham emerge from the barn and run off with a gun in his belt.

His trail was picked up again heading south, prompting the San Francisco *Chronicle* to announce: ". . . [Dunham's] objective point is possibly the Cantua Canyon, Joaquin Murrieta's famous hiding place. Once in the canyon Dunham would be comparatively safe as long as he wishes to remain undercover, as its many hidden nooks would enable him to defy discovery."

Dunham was making about fifteen miles a day. Sheriffs Lyndon and Ballou, with a large party of men, took the train south to Hollister, a town southwest of Pacheco Pass. They intended to work north to cut off Dunham's escape route.



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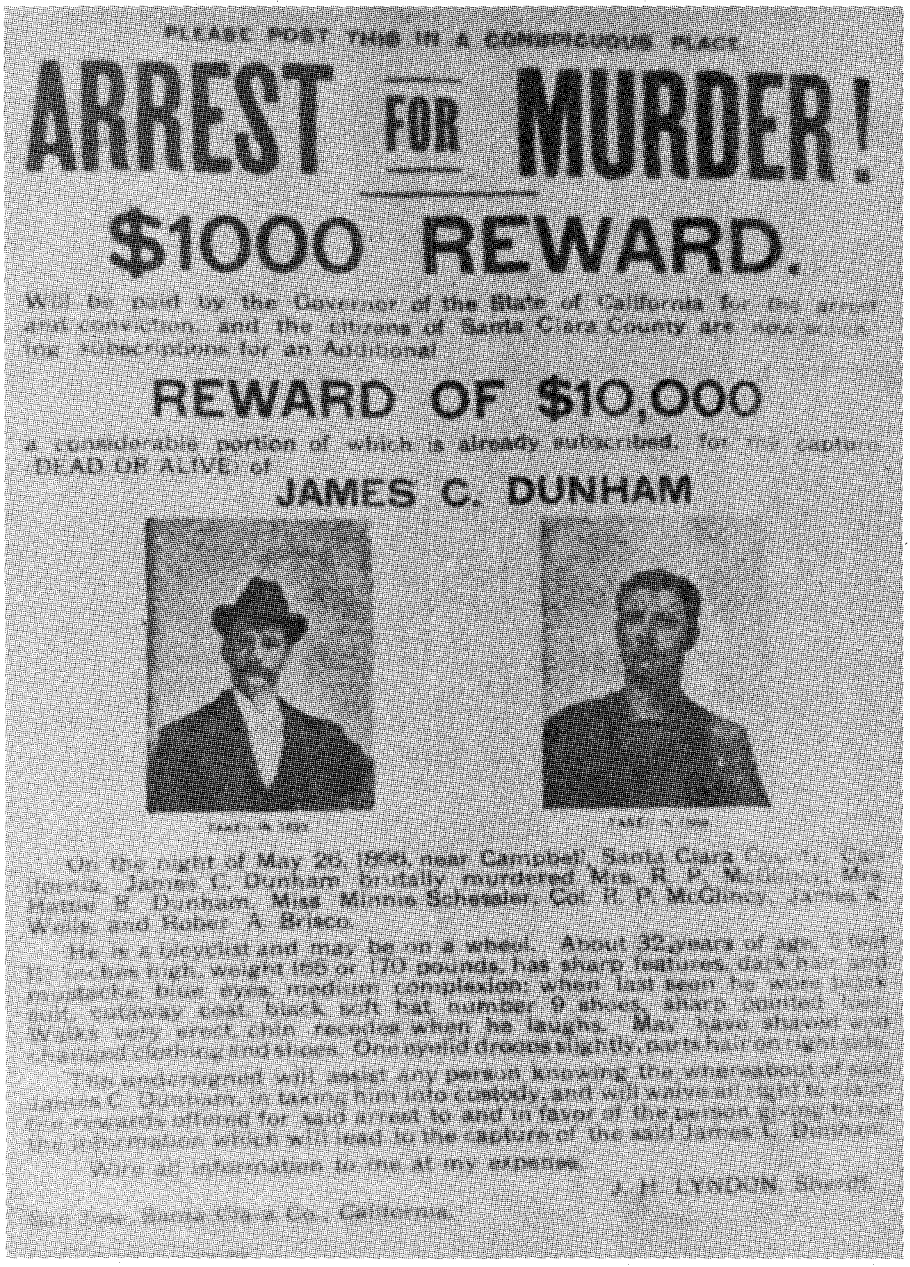

PLEASE POST THIS IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE

ARREST FOR MURDER!

$1000 REWARD.

Will be paid by the Governor of the State of California for the arrest and conviction, and the citizens of Santa Clara County are now soliciting subscriptions for an Additional

REWARD OF $10,000

a considerable portion of which is already subscribed, for the capture (DEAD OR ALIVE) of

JAMES C. DUNHAM

On the night of May 26, 1898, near Campbell, Santa Clara County, California, James C. Dunham brutally murdered Mrs. R. P. McGlincy, Mrs. Hattie B. Dunham, Miss Minnie Schessler, Col. R. P. McGlincy, James K. Wells, and Robert A. Brisco.

He is a bicyclist and may be on a wheel. About 32 years of age, [illegible] inches high, weight 165 or 170 pounds, has sharp features, dark hair and mustache, blue eyes, medium complexion; when last seen he wore black suit, cutaway coat, black soft hat, number 9 shoes, sharp pointed toes. Walks very erect, chin recedes when he laughs. May have shaved and changed clothing and shoes. One eyelid droops slightly, parts hair on right side.

The undersigned will assist any person knowing the whereabout of said James C. Dunham, in taking him into custody, and will waive all right to claim the rewards offered for said arrest to and in favor of the person giving to me the information which will lead to the capture of the said James C. Dunham.

Wire all information to me at my expense.

J. H. LYNDON, Sheriff.

San Jose, Santa Clara Co., California.

Author's Photo

This wanted poster, pledging a reward of $11,000 for James Dunham, dead or alive, was circulated through the West.

With the massive body of searchers moving south from the Pass, the *Chronicle* confidently announced that "his chances for escape are now slim."

A number of Dunham sightings were false, and many were the tramps who quaked under the pointed barrels of rifles and shotguns held by the reward-hungry men. More accurate, no doubt, were the sightings of a few vaqueros on ranches in the rugged, dry mountains, who reported to lawmen that they had seen a man on foot running through open areas and walking along steep slopes. But so remote were the high-country cattle spreads that most of the hands had no knowledge of Dunham or the murders.

Sheriff John Matthews of Monterey County, to the west, arrived with a large posse to assist Lyndon in working north. With additional posses closing in from the east, north, and west, it appeared that the net was finally closing on James Dunham.

Then they lost the trail. Circling, searching, and searching again, the men following Dunham from the north ran entirely out of signs; all evidence of the hardy fugitive had vanished. The valleys of Quien Sabe and Panoche on the way to Cantua Canyon were thoroughly scoured, but not a trace of Dunham was found. More men were added to the chase and ranchers were closely questioned, but the quarry went undetected. The net had closed but the fish was not in it.

Sheriff Scott of Fresno County and Sheriff Buckner of Kings County led a manhunt into the fastness of Cantua Canyon. From the west, Cantua could be entered only through shoulder-width rocky gorges threaded by a narrow horse trail. The canyon could also be approached from the east, where Cantua Creek wound its way along the canyon floor through an opening leading to the San Joaquin Valley. The lawmen worked into the canyon from both ends, patrolling carefully as they slowly wove their way through the immense jumble of rocks.

Barren sentinel peaks nearly 5,000 feet high guarded the desolate bastion. A favorite refuge for men on the run, Cantua Canyon was home to only a few Chilean and Mexican miners and squatters. Most of them were friendly to bandits seeking the haven of Cantua, and none would admit seeing Dunham.

After several more days of searching, the exhausted lawmen went home, each to his own county. The *Chronicle* summed up the failed chase: "Footsore, weary, and unshaven, with torn clothes and broken shoes, the squad of officers which has been hunting Dunham returned this afternoon on the 5 o'clock train from the south. They regretfully confessed that all their work had been in vain and that after days of toil and nights with but little if any sleep, they were forced to return and confess that the man so much wanted had eluded them."

AND WHAT OF Dunham? What happened to the man who was the object of the largest manhunt the state had ever seen? Though all future reported sightings were patiently followed up, James Dunham was never seen or heard from again.

No satisfactory answers to Dunham's final whereabouts or even his motivation for the six murders have ever been determined. Was he insane? Those who knew him said not. Did he feel somehow wronged by the McGlincys? Was it pent-up hatred born of an awful feeling of inferiority in his relations with the refined family?

James Dunham's final fate may never be known, and it might seem that justice was thwarted in this case. But the epitaph across the foot of his victims' adjoining graves in San Jose's Oak Hill Cemetery bears a stark, prophetic warning. It reads: "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

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TW177—THE OLD-TIME COWHAND. By Ramon F. Adams. In this reprint, highly respected western authority Adams tells an honest story about what the cowboy really did and thought. The American cowboy emerges as a recognizable human being far removed from the inventions of the horse opera. "Encyclopedic in its coverage of the subject"—*Library Journal.* University of Nebraska Press.

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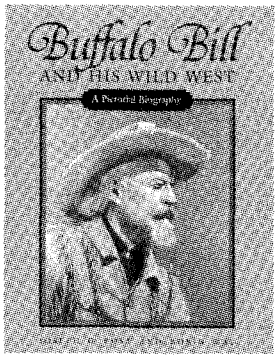

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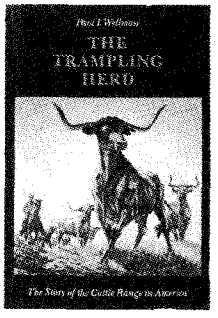

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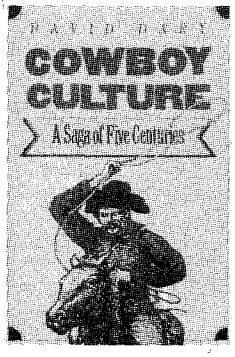

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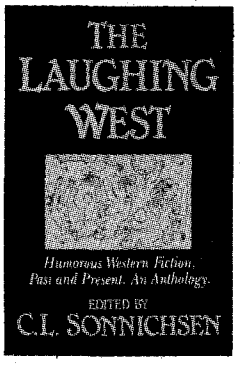

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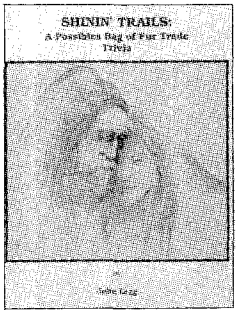

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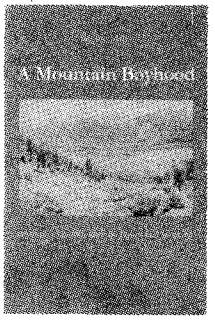

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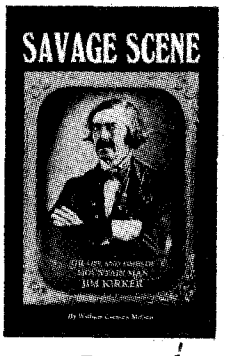

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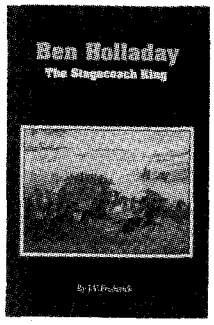

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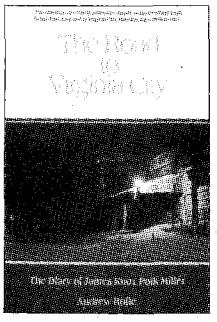

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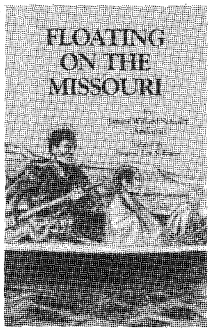

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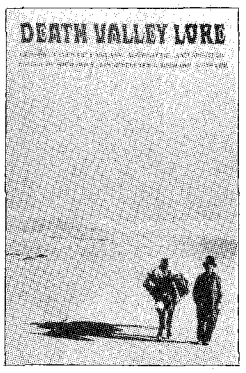

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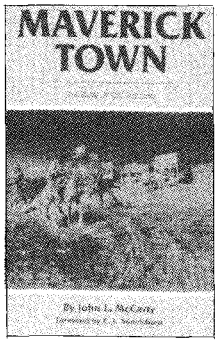

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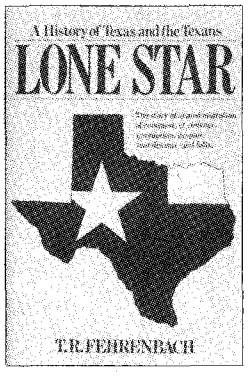

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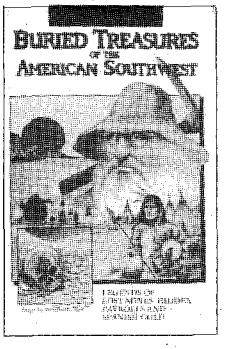

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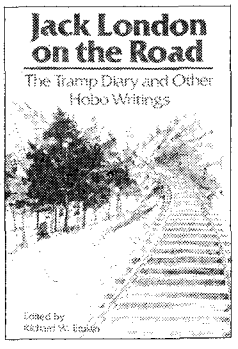

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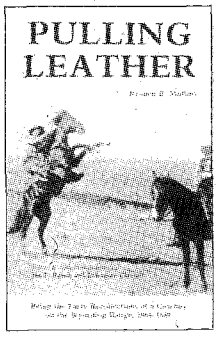

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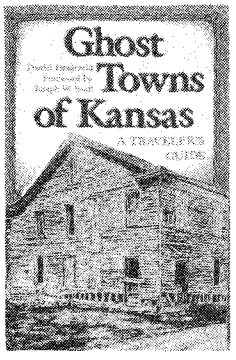

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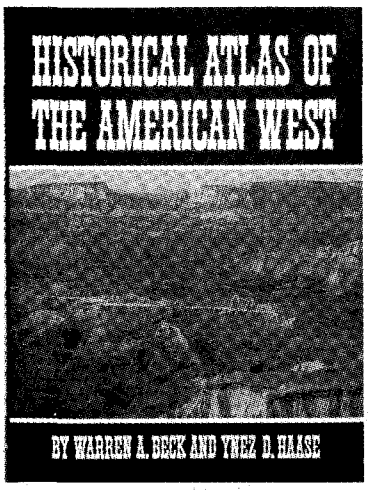

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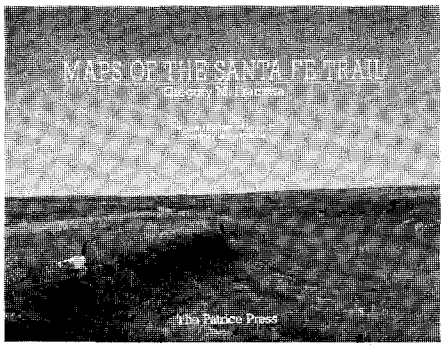

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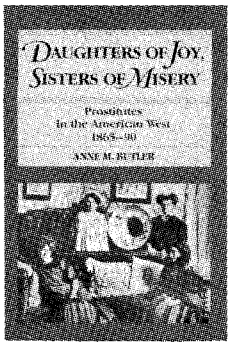

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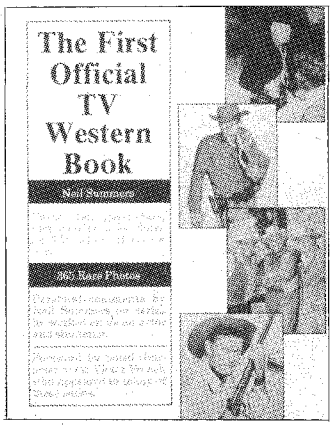

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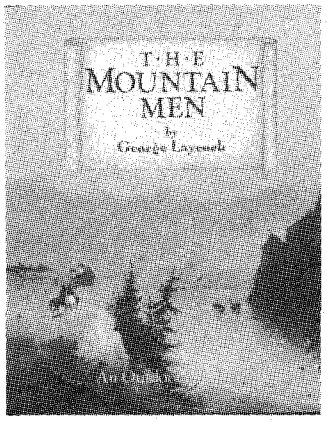

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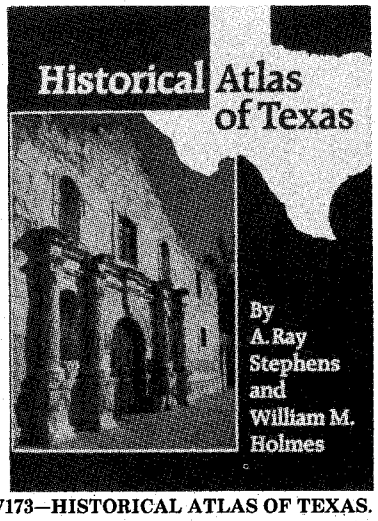

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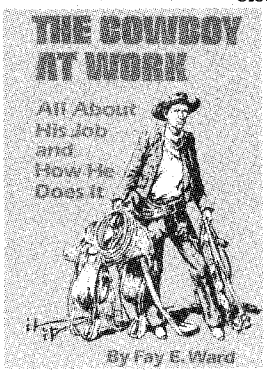

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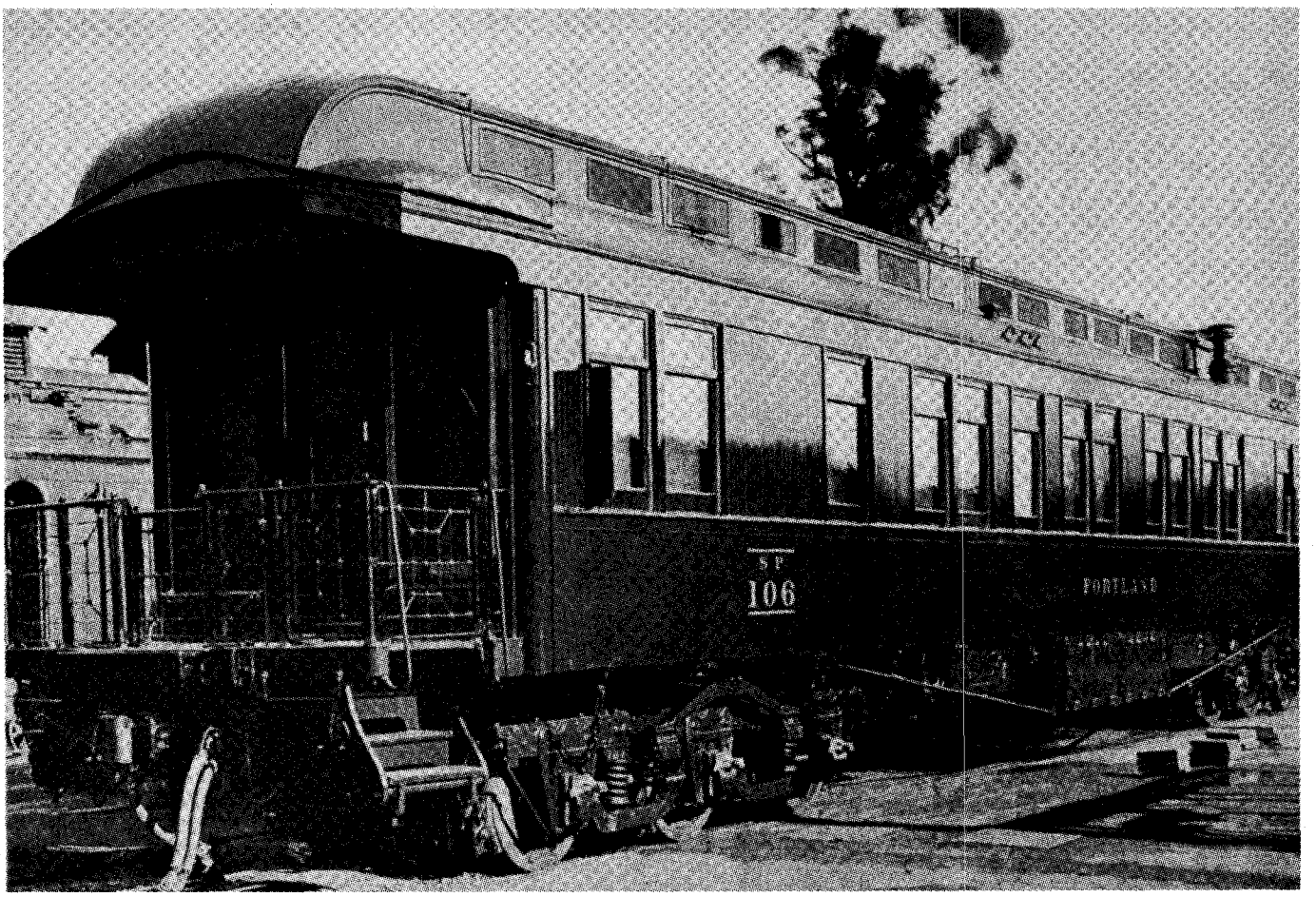

Southern Pacific Photo

Southern Pacific official's car, circa 1892, similar to the "danger car" used on the gold train.

The Gold Train

By RICHARD PATTERSON

As mid-summer of 1892 approached, the nation faced the beginning of a financial crisis. During the third year of President Benjamin Harrison's administration, the country's gold reserves dropped decidedly. Because of reduced revenues, only a small surplus of gold remained in the U.S. Treasury, and it was shrinking rapidly due to a spreading fear that a general business failure was imminent. In Washington the government was concerned that, if called upon, it might not be able to redeem the currency in circulation.

In July, United States Treasury Secretary Charles Foster was given even more shocking news. The subtreasury in New York City had been allowed to run dangerously low on coin and bullion, and it could run out completely if the city's banking houses made unusual demands on the government for gold. Foster anxiously huddled with his advisors: there would have to be an immediate transfer to New York of at least $20,000,000 in coin from another subtreasury; the only subtreasury that could spare any amount was the one in San Francisco.

At first the transfer appeared to present no problem. For years, it had been customary for the Treasury Department to ship gold coin in amounts up to $200,000 by registered railway mail. The coin was merely enclosed in leather pouches, locked with brass locks, and packed in rugged rawhide trunks. The shipments, of course, were always kept secret.

Plans were made immediately to follow the same procedure; the amount of each shipment would be raised to $1,000,000, and the whole job could be completed in twenty days. But no sooner had the order been issued than word leaked to the newspapers. Fearing robberies, Secretary Foster called off the plan.

Foster next considered putting the job into the hands of Wells, Fargo & Company. But with the armed guards that would be required, and the special heavy-duty express cars that were believed necessary, the best price Wells, Fargo could come up with to handle the task was $60,000. That would be an enormous expense to rectify a mistake that could have been avoided. President Harrison was running for

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reelection in the fall, and his opponents would make much to do about such government waste.

Foster and his advisors huddled again. Time was running short. The transfer would have to be made in a single shipment, and registered railway mail was the only answer. Post office officials were consulted. Such a shipment could be accomplished; the problem would be secrecy. If word got out about the value of the shipment, there almost certainly would be a robbery attempt.

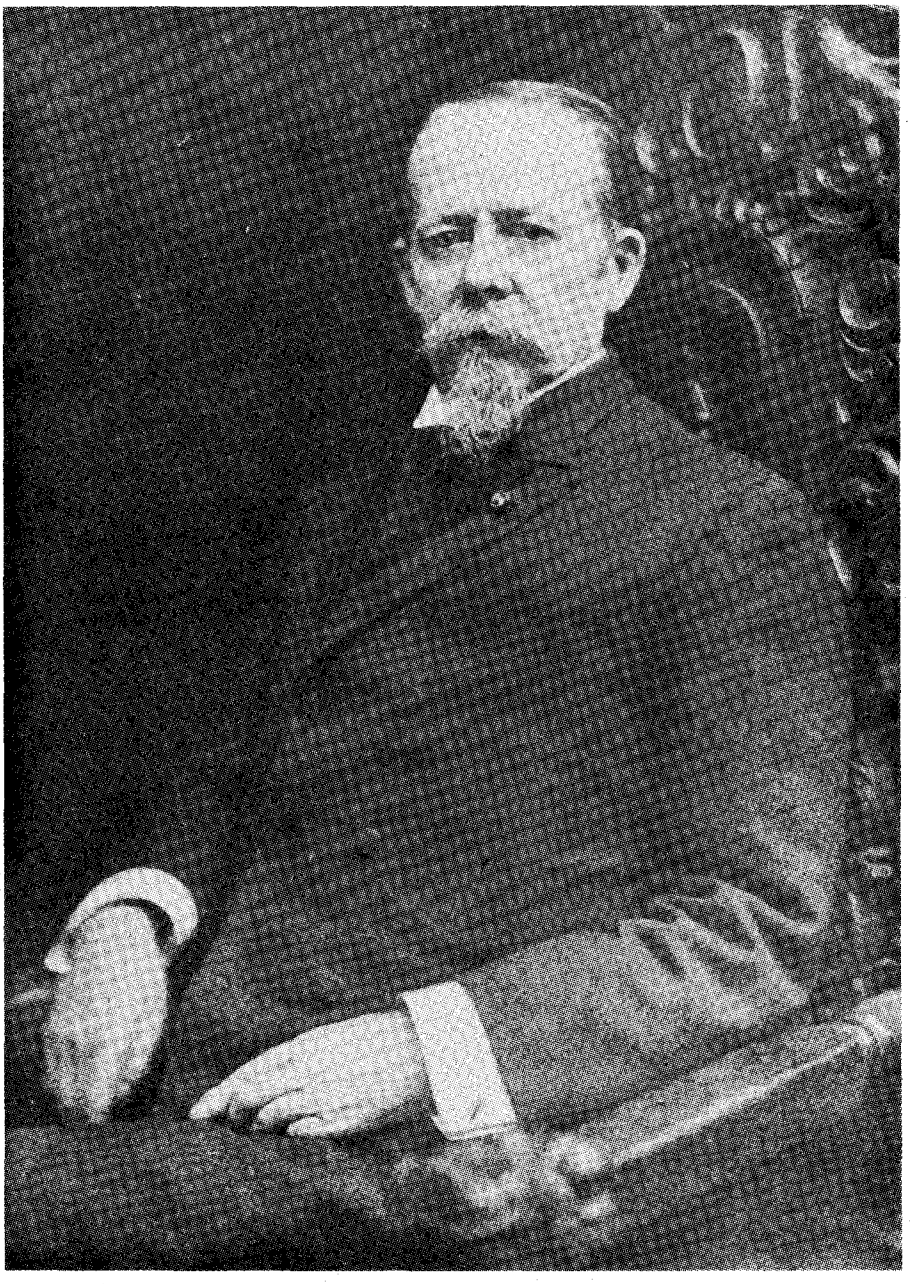
One would think the federal government, with all of its resources, would have had little to fear from holdups. But in 1892, the nation's railroads and express companies were reeling under attacks by train robbers. The problem was especially severe on the western frontier, where the rails had simply outdistanced the ability to protect them. In an embarrassing public admission, Wade Hampton, United States commissioner of railroads, would be announcing to the nation that train robbery had reached epidemic proportions, and that no section of the country was safe. Harry P. Robinson, publisher of *Railway Age*, was complaining in his editorials that travelers and shippers were being "terrorized, plundered and humiliated," and yet train robbery "goes on almost daily with impunity."

MANY OF THE successful train robbery gangs had railroad employees on their payrolls. The Dalton gang, at that time ravaging express cars in Indian Territory and, according to some accounts, California, was particularly accomplished at this. The possibility of a dishonest employee's learning of the shipment especially worried railway mail officials, because transporting the gold from San Francisco to New York would involve using the tracks of at least four different railroads: the Southern Pacific, the Union Pacific, the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern, and the New York Central.

Once the decision to ship the gold was made, responsibility for the shipment's success was given to James E. White, general superintendent of the Railway Mail Service. "Captain" White, as he was known to his men, was a proven organizer and a successful innovator. If $20 million in gold could be safely transported 3,300 miles, White was the man who could get it done.

White's first act was to select five trusted division superintendents from the Railway Mail Service. They, in turn, were each to choose nine of their most loyal and courageous mail clerks. Without making an issue of it, preference was to be given to men who had seen combat either in the Civil War or in military service on the frontier. White insisted on this. He was himself a veteran. He had enlisted in 1861 as a private in the Iowa Infantry and by the war's end had risen to captain. In his four years of fighting with Iowa's Third and Thirteenth Regiments, he learned to respect men who were forced to stand up and face death daily. He wanted that kind of men on an important mission such as the gold train.

The division superintendents were told the true nature of the mission, but the mail clerks were not. The clerks, who were ordered to leave immediately for San Francisco, were told that they had been selected from their respective divisions for a new incentive training program. White instructed his division superintendents to tell the clerks that "the work of the division from which they were detailed had been so exceptionally good for some years that the Post Office Department desired as a measure of encouragement to recognize it in some unusual and attractive way, and believed that an outing across the country to San Francisco, with a few days for sight-seeing in that city, would not only please them, but that in extending to them the courtesies of the Eighth Division, the clerks of that far-off section would be brought in close contact with them, with the result that they



Author's Collection

Capt. James White was the man in charge of the $20 million gold train.

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would discuss the service, the methods in vogue in their respective divisions, and these distant comrades would absorb knowledge that would be of assistance to them in their work."

The clerks were to be kept in the dark until the day of departure, Thursday, August 4, when they were to be issued their weapons: Springfield carbines and Colt .45 revolvers.

Having fifty-one armed men to protect the gold should have given Captain White some peace of mind; however, recent experience in using extra armed guards on large rail shipments was not encouraging. In September 1888, Southern Pacific officials, having been tipped off about a possible holdup attempt, loaded the express and mail cars of an eastbound flyer with detectives and federal marshals. The bandits struck as expected, near Harwood, Texas, but instead of capturing them, the guards ended up shooting two trainmen.

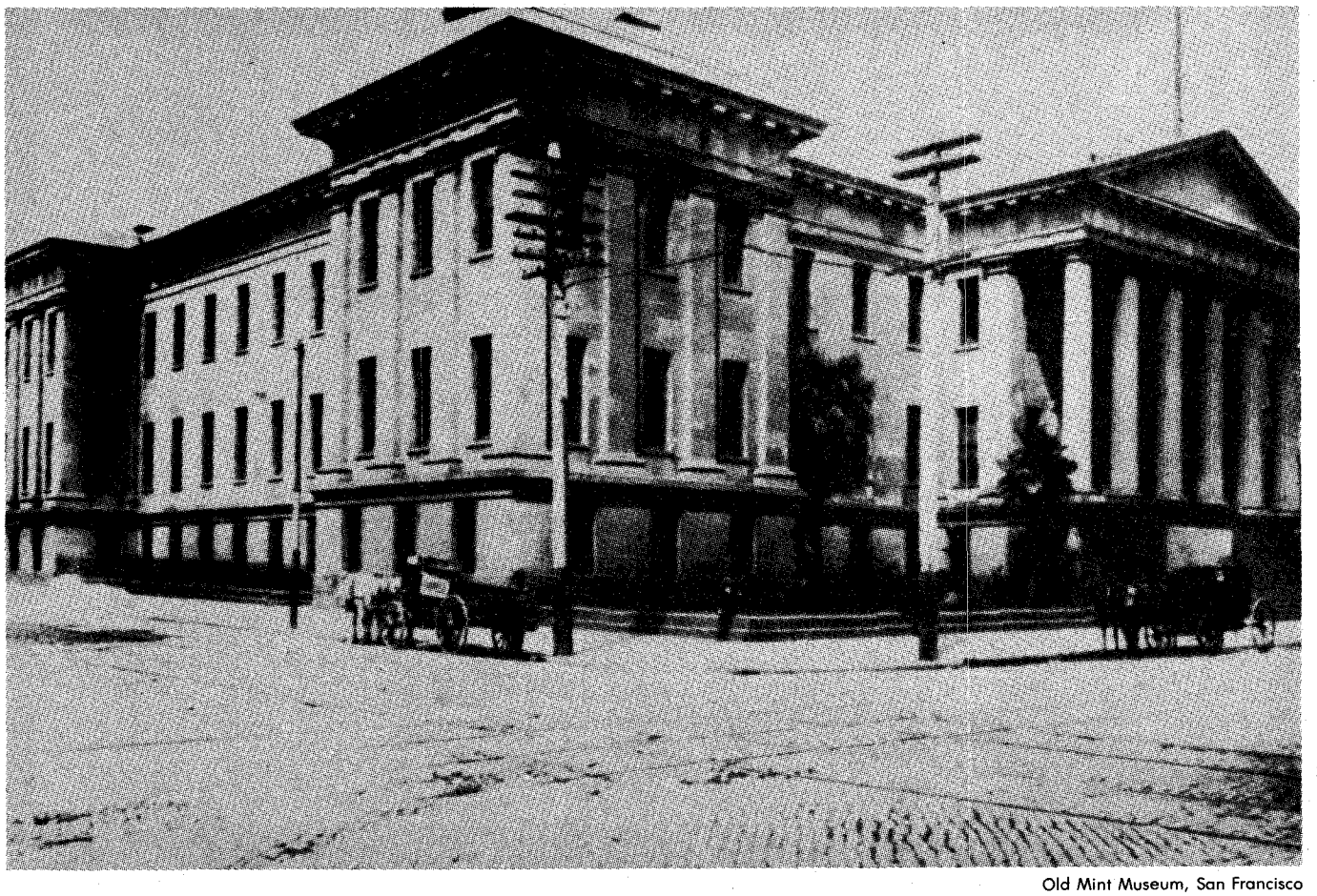
A similar attempt proved equally unsuccessful the previous July at Adair, Oklahoma Territory. A bevy of armed guards had been placed in a coach behind the express car. When the robbers attacked, the guards blazed away. Their shots went astray and struck two customers of a nearby store, killing one.

A Southern Pacific baggage agent was approached by a woman who asked him to give a letter to one of the railway mail clerks. That was not an unusual request, so the agent agreed to pass it on. But when he looked at the envelope, he saw the name of a man suspected of being a member of a gang of train robbers.

For the trip to New York, the gold would be carried in four railway cars: an innocent-looking combination of two post office cars (Chicago, Burlington & Quincy P.O. Car No. 933 and Lake Shore & Michigan Southern P.O. Car No. 695), a baggage car (Union Pacific No. 1092), and an "iron clad" express car (Union Pacific No. 1242). This last car, used by the U.P on lonely stretches in outlaw-infested Wyoming, was reinforced with boiler plate and iron bars on the windows. There also would be a fifth car: a special Southern Pacific "officers' car" with large "observation" windows in each end. An elaborate coach of this kind would attract attention, but it was considered worth the risk because it made a perfect "command car," or as it was labeled for the mission, the "danger car." Situated behind the locomotive tender, the danger car would give White and his men a good view of the track ahead on either side of the locomotive and visual contact with the cab. Should the locomotive be halted, it would be impossible for bandits to take charge without being seen. Through the windows in the rear of the danger car, the guards could keep an eye on the cars containing the gold.

The gold itself would be evenly stacked on the floors of the four revenue cars, in 500 sturdy wooden crates, each containing eight sacks filled with five-, ten-, and twenty-dollar coins.

While the crates were being filled at the subtreasury, located at the United States Mint at Fifth and Mission streets



Old Mint Museum, San Francisco

The United States Mint, San Francisco, circa 1892. The gold train's $20 million shipment originated here.

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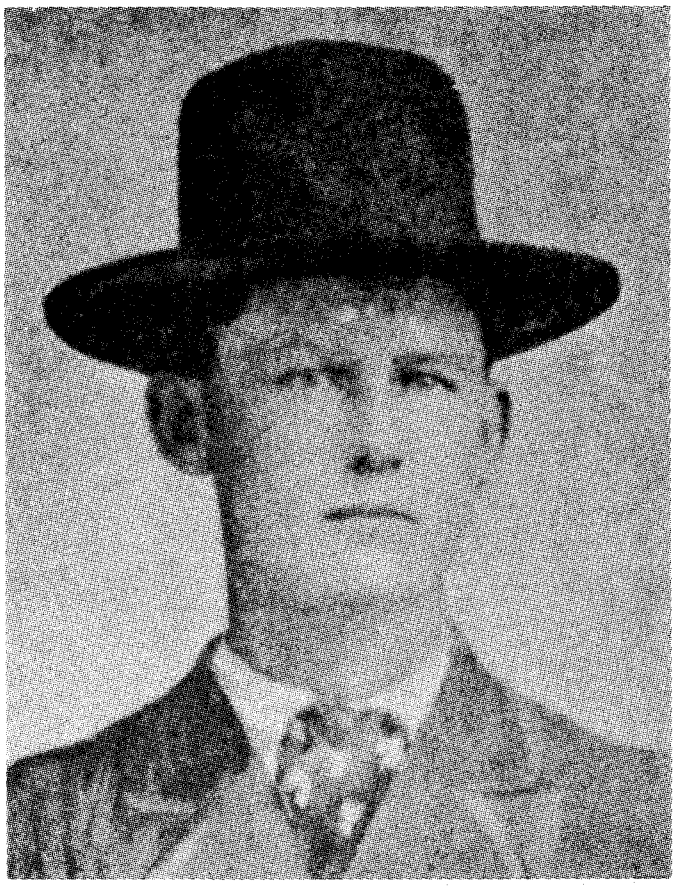

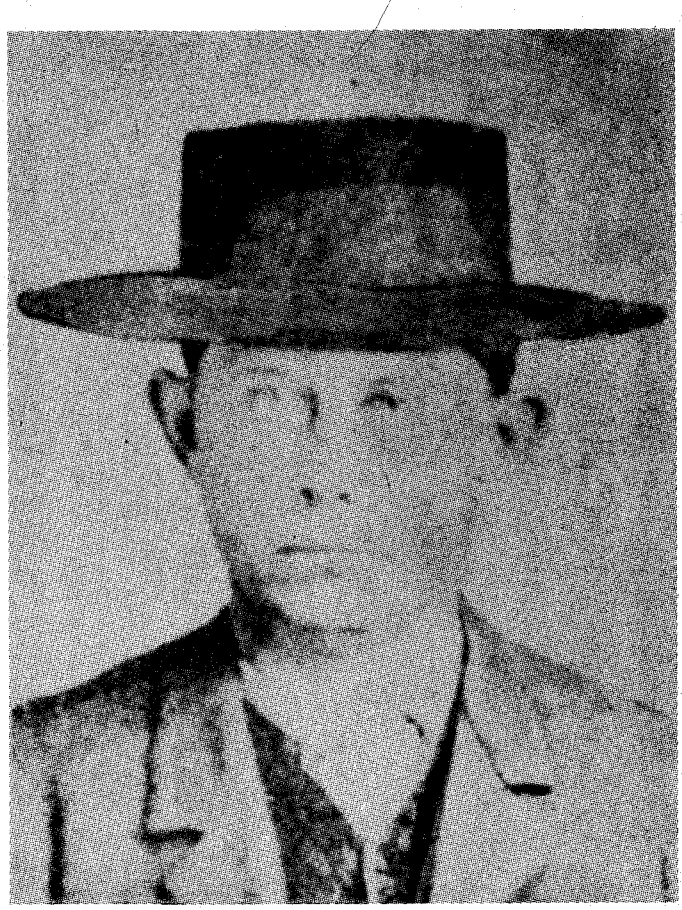

File Photos, Pinkerton National Detective Agency, 1907

Bob and Grat Dalton, prime suspects in four Southern Pacific robberies, were the government's greatest concern at the time of the $20 million gold shipment.

in downtown San Francisco, Captain White received an urgent summons from J.A. Filmore, general manager of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which would handle the first leg of the trip. Filmore had disturbing news. A Southern Pacific baggage agent, while loading an eastbound express, was approached by a woman who asked him to give a letter to one of the railway mail clerks. That was not an unusual request (a letter placed directly on a railway mail car would leave San Francisco as much as a day earlier than one mailed at the main post office), so the agent agreed to pass it on. But when he looked at the envelope, he saw the name of a man suspected of being a member of a gang of train robbers. Although the baggage agent knew nothing of the gold shipment, he felt that the letter might contain information of value to the railroad, so he turned it over to his supervisor.

Neither Filmore nor White could legally open the letter, but too much was at stake to gamble. White carefully sliced open the envelope. The contents were innocent enough, a wife's jottings to her husband who was away in another city. Could it be a code? The timing was almost too perfect to be coincidence. Word could have leaked from the mint that gold was to be packed for shipment by train. Maybe even the gold train's schedule had been obtained. For the next hour White and Filmore studied every word. Each line was read every possible way. The paper and envelope were examined with a magnifying glass. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary.

James White was a postal official. He had already violated departmental rules by opening the letter. He had to send it on to its destination. He could, however, delay it until the gold shipment was well under way.

Perhaps because of his intentional violation of postal rules, White never revealed the name of the suspected train robber to whom the letter was addressed. Even years later, after his retirement, White would refer to the addressee only as "a member of a gang of train robbers." Independent research, however, suggests that it may have been one of the Dalton gang, some of whom were in California at the time.

On the day of the gold train's departure, the mail clerks, now officially designated "guards," were given their instructions in detail. There were to be nine men and one division superintendent assigned to each car. Those units were in turn divided into two five-man squads, one of which was to be on duty while the other rested. Those who were off duty were to remain in their cars, on mattresses placed on top of the crates of gold. While off duty, a guard could sleep, but he was to keep his carbine at his side with the barrel "resting in the inside curve of the arm." Also, each off-duty guard's revolver was to be "within reach."

When on duty, the guards were to sit near the doors and windows of their car with their "revolvers in holsters belted on their bodies, their carbines in reach, and the doors bolted and locked." No one was to enter, not even a guard assigned to that car, without giving a prearranged password.

To hide the identity of the train, which for purposes of the trip was designated as the second section of the regularly scheduled Southern Pacific's "Transcontinental Fast Mail," a manifest was fabricated with waybills that listed the cargo as "Silk from the Orient." While such a shipment would seldom require four cars, a large cargo of silk would be considered very valuable, and would help explain the presence of so many guards. This "cargo of silk" story was carefully passed on to selected Southern

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Pacific employees, who were ordered to see that it was leaked to outsiders "whenever its effectiveness was not likely to be doubted."

If the guards had any doubt that their assignment was dangerous, it was likely dispelled by the news that spread rapidly through the Southern Pacific yards that morning. Another Southern Pacific train had been struck by robbers shortly before midnight just west of Fresno at a small station called Collis. The robbers used dynamite to cripple the locomotive and blast their way into the express car. The car that had been assaulted was new, sturdily built, and reinforced with iron, yet the robbers got in. Captain White no doubt thought of this as he surveyed the four revenue cars that made up the gold train. Only one was iron clad; the remaining three were the older, wooden type that train robbers seldom had difficulty entering.

The "Silk Train" left the Southern Pacific terminal Thursday evening, August 4. Despite the disturbing news from Collis, James White was fairly certain that he had done everything possible to ensure a safe journey. The locomotive engineer, however, was not so sure. He informed White early on that he had doubts about the equipment they were using. All of the participating railroads were supposed to have provided the best rolling stock available. That, no doubt, was done, but what worried the engineer was the weight they were pulling: forty tons in gold alone, plus the guards and their arms. Though the locomotive was strong and could do the job, the engineer worried about the strain on the cars, especially the couplers and drawheads (the frames to which the couplers were attached). To play it safe, he notified White that when they made their first stop at Sacramento, he was going to call for a complete inspection of the train to see how it had withstood the early miles.

The engineer had guessed right. The post office car had already loosened a drawhead. This in itself was not too serious, since it could be repaired with only a short delay. The problem lay ahead: because of the excessive weight, other drawheads, and possibly couplers, would likely loosen. If that happened on a steep grade, it could be a disaster.

East of Sacramento lay an exhausting climb up the western slope of the Sierra Nevadas, always a strain on a train of even average weight. As a precaution, the engineer ordered safety chains installed between the cars. They would provide some protection, he informed White, but if a coupler or drawhead suddenly gave way on a steep grade, especially near the front of the train, the chain might snap. Even worse, he had some doubt that the new Westinghouse air brake system, touted as one of the greatest improvements in railroad safety, could stop the heavy load if it broke loose near the top of the grade.

As the train began the climb to the first pass, those on board who were aware of the danger prayed silently. Despite the worrisome creaks and groans, the equipment appeared to be standing the strain.

"A torpedo signal!" somebody shouted—the trainman's signal for trouble ahead on the track. It could be a ruse by bandits. Railroad torpedo signals stolen from section gang shacks were used frequently by robbers to stop trains. But the engineer did not slow the train. Apparently suspecting trouble, he was ignoring the signal.

But suddenly there came a frightening jolt. A coupler had given way!

Railway mail clerks of the 1890s were no strangers to train wrecks, and there were several on board who had been on "runaways." They knew the feeling instantly. When a coupler breaks on an upward grade, forward motion slows at once. The brakes, if applied immediately, struggle to hold, causing the cars to shudder. Next, there is a terrifying pause—for an instant all is still—then the deadly weight overcomes the brakes, and the cars begin to roll backward, slowly gathering speed. There is a wild plunge down the grade, with the cars rocking and careening out of control, until the first curve.

But the cars of the gold train were still climbing, with no slack in speed. The safety chain had held. The train was still intact.

White gave thanks that he had a cautious engineer. But in only a few miles a second coupler broke. Again an anxious moment. But again the safety chain held.

The grade was finally made, and the men relaxed—but not for long. Up ahead, there was an explosion! Was it the Daltons and their dynamite, in an attempt to derail the locomotive? The guards rushed to the windows, weapons ready.

"A torpedo signal!" somebody shouted—the trainman's signal for trouble ahead on the track. It could be a ruse placed on the track by bandits. Railroad torpedo signals stolen from section gang shacks were used frequently by robbers to stop trains.

But the enginner did not slow the train. Apparently suspecting trouble, he was ignoring the signal. What if it were legitimate? What if there were another train stalled ahead on the tracks?

Then they saw him, a hundred yards ahead on the track, a man frantically waving a red flag, another ruse often used by train robbers. But this signal the engineer could not disobey. If the flag were legitimate, and if there were a train stalled on the track, they would crash into it, possibly killing all on board.

The engineer hit the brakes. The guards leaped to their feet, nervously searching the canyon walls for movement. The engineer scanned the track for a barricade, another favorite trick of train robbers.

Then, about 300 yards ahead, they saw them, an ordinary railroad work crew—a section gang with not a weapon in the bunch—just picks and shovels. It was a welcome sight.

The gold train eased on past, and after a few hearty waves, the sweaty workers returned to their labor. The guards relaxed, leaned back on their seats, and uncocked their carbines. The tension broken, they began to joke and kid each other.

A stop of over two hours was required at Colfax to repair the broken couplers. It seemed an eternity, but the engineer assured Captain White they could make up the time once they reached the Nevada line. But no sooner were they under steam than they slowed for yet another signal, this time an official one. The gold train was to take a siding to make way for a westbound Southern Pacific freight. White was furious. He had been assured that his train had priority; under no circumstances was he to be put on a siding where he could be vulnerable to an attack.

The freight steamed by, and the gold train got under way once more. At the next stop, a livid James White wired San Francisco. A immediate reply revealed that for some reason the gold train had lost its priority over oncoming trains. But it could be regained. The gold train was officially the second sec-

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Railway Mail Service Photo

Railway mail clerks at work. Forty-five hand-picked clerks, armed with carbines and revolvers, were assigned to guard the Treasury Department's gold shipment.

tion of the S.P.'s Fast Mail. Up ahead was the first section, which still had priority. If they could catch the first section, they could "piggy-back" it all the way in to Salt Lake City.

Those were words the gold train's engineer loved to hear. Once he had cleared the eastern slope of the Sierras he could "cut loose" between signals. When he did, Captain White got all the speed he wanted—and more. By the time they had reached the winding curves of Nevada's Humboldt Sink, the tail of the train, as White would tell it later, was "cracking like lightning." Terrified, White sent a guard scrambling up to the cab with instructions to "slow her down." Tell the engineer, White told the guard, that "my cut loose order was for New York, not eternity." At the next stop, White assured the engineer that he wanted to catch the first section of the Fast Mail, but it probably would be best to cut loose only on "a good piece of track, reasonably straight."

The gold train caught the Southern Pacific's Fast Mail at Ogden, and trailed it on in to Salt Lake City. There, the gold train changed its identity and became the first section of the Union Pacific's eastbound Omaha & Ogden Fast Mail.

If Captain White were pleased on completing the first leg of the trip at Salt Lake City, the feeling was short-lived. On arriving at the depot, White sent for newspapers to distribute to the off-duty guards. There, on the front page, a headline blared that a huge shipment of gold was being sent by rail from San Francisco to New York City.

WHITE WAS stunned. The trip had really only begun. The steep climb up the western slope of the Wyoming Rockies lay ahead, dangerous miles for a heavy train, and, according to Union Pacific officials, ideal country for train robbers. Worse still, no one seriously could expect that the leisurely switch to the U.P. would fool any bandits who might already be on the gold train's trail or those with informants in Salt Lake City. As an added precaution, White asked that the train be switched again at Green River, Wyoming, from the first to the second section of the Omaha & Ogden Fast Mail. The deception was slight, to say the least, but it might confuse anyone who had been watching the make-up of the train at the Salt Lake yards.

The train reached Green River without incident and was successfully switched. At Rawlins, Wyoming, however, an entirely unexpected problem arose. A new engineer was to be taken on, but when he was told what he would be carrying, he stormed into his dispatcher's office and told him he wanted out. He reminded him that he had been held up twice by robbers on this very same run, and there was no way he was going to risk another robbery by pulling a $20 million shipment of gold. The dispatcher summoned Captain White, who tried to reason with the anxious trainman. White told the engineer that there were fifty armed men guarding the gold. Furthermore, said White, he—Capt. James White, general superintendent of the Railway Mail Service—would take all responsibility for violating any train rules. The engineer was to "pay no attention to signals, flags or lanterns, but send his engine on under full headway." Of course, he had no authority to make such a statement, but Captain White, an administrator who had always been known to go "by the book," was rapidly learning to bend the rules. The bluff worked, and the jittery engineer agreed to make the run.

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The miles east of Rawlins went smoothly, but as the train pulled into the Laramie depot, White sensed that the engineer was beginning to fold. Luckily, Laramie was a division point for the Union Pacific, which meant that it was home base for U.P. officials with divisional authority. White raced to the division superintendent's office. When the gold train pulled out, the skittish engineer had been replaced with one bearing more grit.

Under way again, the gold train climbed steadily up the western slope of the Laramie Mountains. At Sherman, near the summit, it stopped to take on water. The off-duty guards, yawned, stretched, and one by one, stepped down to relieve themselves by the side of the tracks. Before long they would reach the Nebraska line. Nebraska was rapidly becoming settled, and towns appeared regularly along the line. Train robbers liked desolate areas; the worst was behind them.

All the guards were back on board when they first heard the sound, "a low hum of voices, and the shuffling of feet" alongside the tracks. The men in the second car quickly cocked their carbines and quietly marshaled at the side doors. At a given signal, the doors were yanked open. Outside, beside the rails, stood a small gathering of tramps, their eyes wide with fear at the sight of a dozen rifle barrels. One look at the menacing faces of the guards, and the trespassers, according to Captain White, wasted no time in "flying into the wilderness."

With the mountains now behind, the gold train rolled into the green-gold valley of the Platte River—for Captain White, a welcome sight. Barring futher equipment failure, there was now every reason to believe they would accomplish their mission.

But to White's dismay, once again the equipment began to fail. In central Nebraska, the locomotive slipped an eccentric, which caused a delay at Omaha. Just over the line into Illinois, several cars developed "hot boxes"—more time down for repairs. Once under way again, the gold train caught another "damned signal," an order to pull over on a siding for a westbound express. White, already fuming, was nearly beside himself when he found that he had been side-tracked for a special train carrying the banners of a frolicking group of Knights of Templars bound for a convention in Denver.

But that was the last delay. From Chicago, the gold train rolled eastward on the shining rails of the proud Lake Shore & Michigan Southern. At Buffalo, the cars were switched to the stately New York Central for the last leg. The danger had all but passed; the chance of a robbery was now remote.

It was early morning, August 9. Five days had passed since the gold train had pulled out of San Francisco. As if on cue, dawn broke with great splendor as the train made its final dash southward through the rising mist of the Hudson Valley. Years later, a nostalgic Capt. James E. White, in reminiscing about his days with the Railway Mail Service, would try to capture the feeling of those last miles: "There was nothing to disturb the peace of anyone, even as the train swept around the curves that wind in and out of the shore line of the beautiful Hudson. I am sure that all the members of that faithful band drank deep of the majestic and peaceful scenery that greeted us that splendid morning. . . . As we looked we realized that there is no other country like our own and that we had been in the keeping of Providence from the beginning to the end of our journey."

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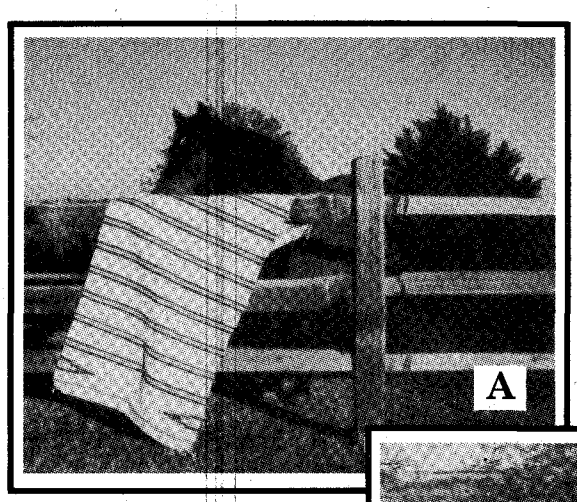

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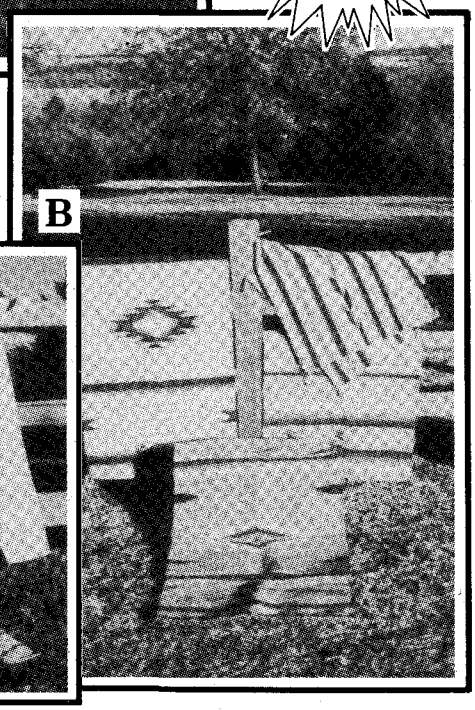

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Doan's Crossing

By ANGIE IRONS

In the spring of 1872, Jonathan Doan, his older brother Calvin, and their two young nephews, Robert and Corwin, rode into Fort Sill, Indian Territory, in what is present-day Oklahoma. They had come from their home in Wilmington, Ohio, looking for a fresh start in life. What they found was a five-year-old fort in the midst of the Kiowa-Comanche Indian reservation. The Indian agency sat less than two miles south of the fort, and a passel of rather hostile Indians kept semi-permanent camps just to the south and east of the agency.

For a while the men worked at any odd jobs they could find; then, with permission of the Indian agent, they set up a small hide and fur trading post on Cache Creek near the agency buildings. The Indians immediately began bringing in buffalo robes and animal pelts for trade. To augment the business Jonathan made a deal for the hides of the seventy to eighty beeves that the agency distributed to the Indians every two weeks. Young Calvin was put to work helping with the butchering and making sure that the Indians didn't make off with any of the cow hides.

Trading was brisk, but the lack of good roads, along with a shortage of wagons for sale, forced the Doans to ship their furs by hired wagons and teamsters to St. Louis, Missouri. The teamsters knew an opportunity when they saw one, and the prices they charged the Doans were exorbitant. The Doans' first year ended with only a marginal profit. They certainly weren't making money, but they were making friends. . . powerful friends.

All Indians were welcomed at their store. On busy days rows of papoose-laden cradles leaned against the trading post walls, and happy puppies and dogs mingled among the cheerful, giggling, trading women. It was a place for the warriors to come and smoke and to talk. The coffee was always hot, and there was plenty of molasses and brown sugar to go in it.

Bits of candy, broken crackers, and lumps of brown sugar became common giveaways at Doan's store, and no one left without a bit of their beloved "sweets" in their hands. To the mighty

Archives/Manuscript Division, Oklahoma Historical Society

Doan's Crossing was a shallow water, low-banked crossing over the Red River. Free from quicksand, this safe ford was used by over nineteen million cattle as they came up the Western Trail from Texas.

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Kiowa and Comanche war chiefs, the Doans wisely bestowed presents of tobacco, beads, and shiny metal for making arrowheads. It was a move of friendship offered by the Doans, and at first it was not accepted by all the Indians. Young Corwin would later recall, "Big Bow, another Kiowa chief, often followed by his warriors, rode up to the little store on Cache Creek. One day he arrogantly asked, would we hand over the goods or should they take them? We told them we would hand over the goods as he designated them. Later when Big Bow and I became good friends, he said, 'Us Indians are fools, not smart like white man. Cause you handed over the goods that day, but Washington took it out of our pay.' It was quite true for as soon as the wards of the government had departed, the bill was turned into their guardian, Uncle Sam."

Business was still picking up, but unfortunately, so was trouble with the Indians. Angered over the lack of food supplies and annuities at their agency, the Kiowas and Comanches grew threatening. Leaving the reservation, they rode into Texas, plundering and murdering along the Red River Valley. Finding no troops in pursuit, they arrogantly returned to Fort Sill, where they boldly threatened the small command. A few of them came to Doan's store, pointed south toward the Red River, and in hushed tones suggested the Doans move their trading business to the much-used river crossing there.

Jonathan took a good look around him. The Indians were in disarray, paying more attention to raiding and warring than to hide and pelt hunting. Young Corwin was ill—perhaps dangerously so—and his cousin, Robert, was simply writhing with homesickness. Jonathan shook his head, loaded his nephews on the next stage for Wilmington, Ohio, and then set out for the Red River crossing with his brother Calvin at his side.

Jonathan and Calvin stopped briefly at the crossing. They agreed that it was a good spot for a trading post, but the buffalo hunters so necessary to their business were deeper in Texas, so they trudged on. At first they set up a trading post near present day Memphis, Texas. Trading was bad. Discouraged, they moved again, going deeper into the Texas plains. Still their business did not prosper, and Jonathan turned his eyes back toward the Indian recommended crossing on the Red River.

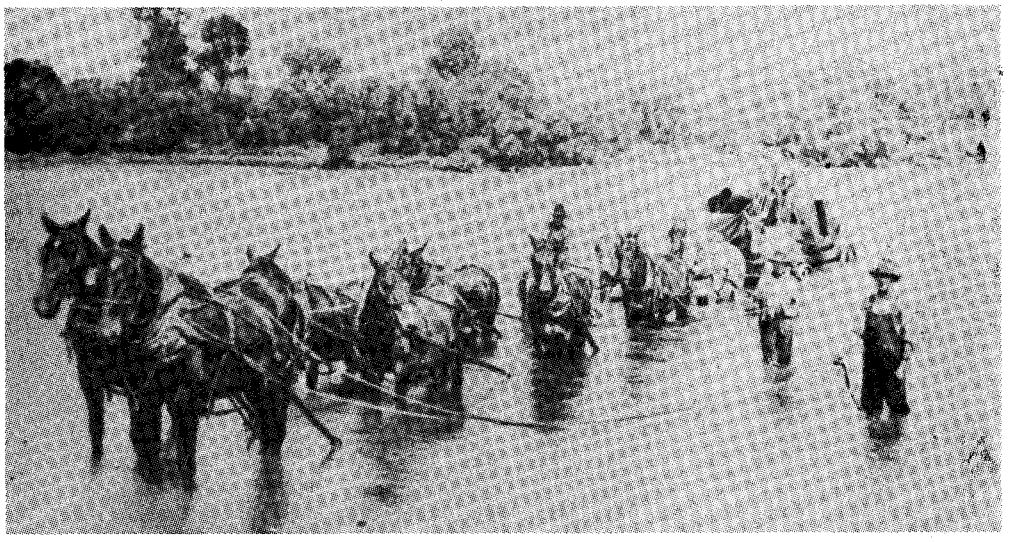
Other eyes were on the crossing. The great cattle herds of Texas were on the move. Most were moving up the famed Chisholm Trail, crossing the Red River into Indian Territory at Red River Station. It was a crowded crossing, a bottle neck, that delayed herds by weeks. An alternate crossing was needed badly and an outfit headed by Maxwell and Morris decided to try to cut a new trail. In late summer, 1874, their outfit left the Chisholm Trail and cut northwesterly across Texas. They pushed their cattle, some 11,000 of them, over the Red River at the very crossing that the Indians had recommended to the Doans. Thus the great Western Cattle Trail was born!

According to cowboy lore, the first herds to come over the trail were "wet" cattle stolen from Old Mexico. They were just two jumps ahead of the Uvalde sheriff when they crossed the ford at the Red River. Legal or illegal, the cattle were just the first of hundreds of thousands to come, and Jonathan Doan knew it. In 1875, he and his brother moved to the low-water crossing.

On the Texas side of the river they picked a spot just a mile and a half south of the crossing and began work on their store. With the help of two hired hands they cut down hackberry and chinaberry trees, cleaned off the limbs and trimmed all the trunks to the same length. Then they stuck the trunks upright into a ditch and filled in the dirt around their bottoms. The spaces between the tree trunks were chinked with mud, and a roof of sod was made. The floor of the twenty-four by thirty foot picket house was dirt; a buffalo hide, flapping in the prairie wind, served as a door.

In one side of the picket house they kept a large supply of ammunition and a small supply of groceries and hard whiskey; the other side, which held a large fireplace, was used for living quarters. By winter they were ready for business. Their first customers were cattle herd stragglers, buffalo hunters, and Indians. Come spring, they were shipping in supplies from far-away Denison, Sherman, and Gainesville, Texas. Later, they would get supplies from the closer, fast-growing town of Wichita Falls.

The next spring and summer nearly 60,000 head of cattle passed the Doan Store headed for the river crossing that was soon to become known as Doan's Crossing. It was a good crossing, the best for a hundred miles in either direction. Its low banks gave the cattle easy entrance to the normally shallow water. The river narrowed here to about a hundred feet in width. In good weather it was a fine crossing. In rainy weather, it



Archives/Manuscript Division, Oklahoma Historical Society

Crossing the Red River at any point was a hardship. It took good teams and hard-muscled men to make a safe crossing.

Eighteen eighty-two brought one of the worst droughts in Texas history, but still the herds pressed on. Kept alive by scant feeding on the drought-resistant butter weed, they headed for Doan's Crossing and the rail head at Dodge City, Kansas. All the cattle in the world seemed to be coming up from Texas.

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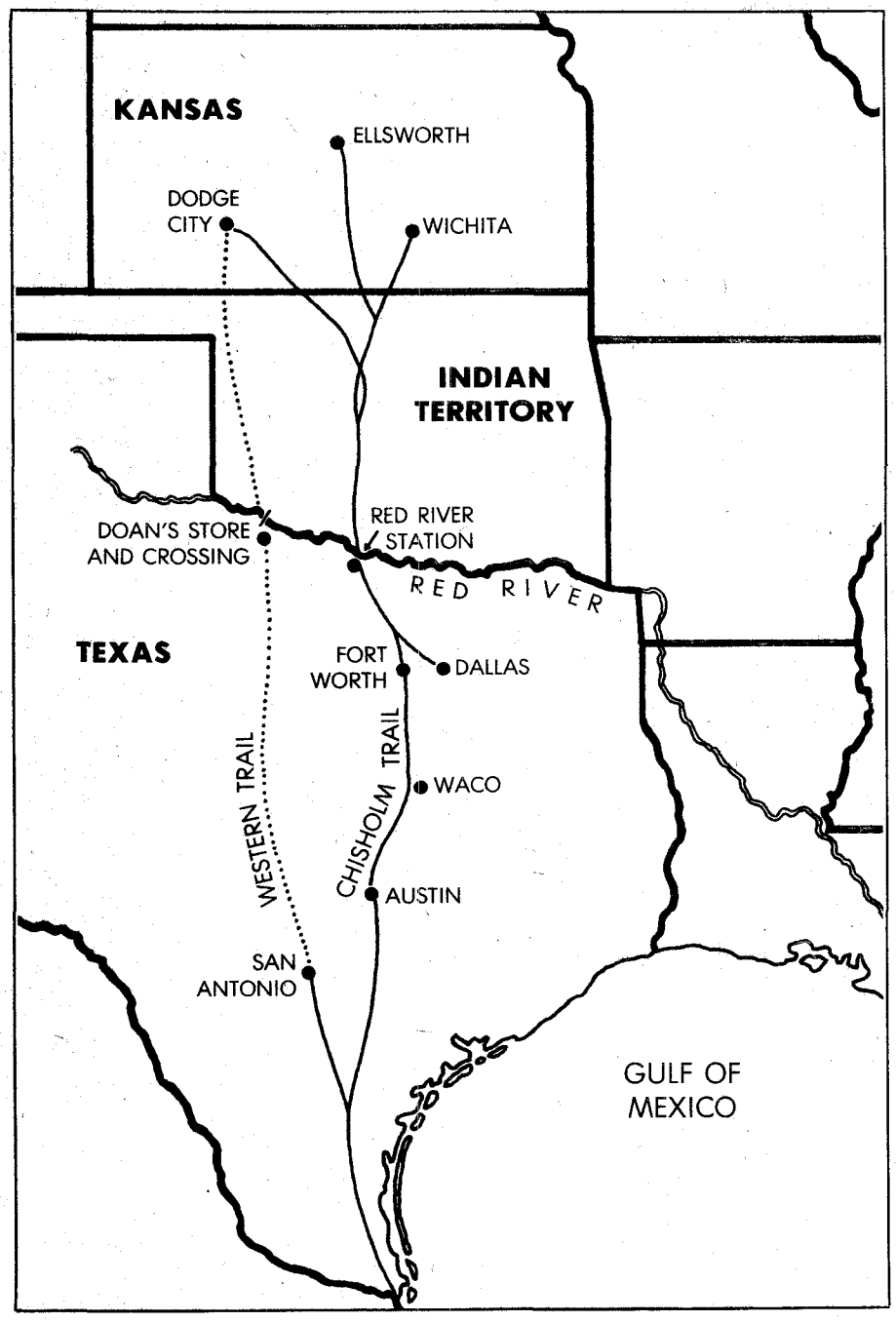
could become treacherous, with its banks widening by three to four thousand yards. At such times its normal three-foot depth could deepen, without warning, to a murderous fifteen feet.

There was no quicksand at Doan's Crossing, and after the passage of several thousand cattle, the sandy bottom became packed, making the crossing even safer. As more cattle came up the trail, Doan's Store began to prosper. By 1878 Jonathan thought his business good enough to send for his two daughters who were still in Ohio. Young Corwin, who had gone back to Ohio in 1874, was now ready to try the western frontier again. With his wife and infant child he accompanied Jonathan's two daughters back to Doan's Store.

When they arrived they found the store nearly empty. Only a keg of powder, some old mustard, several cases of sardines, and a few tins of crackers adorned the wooden shelves. Jonathan was gone...on a manhunt. He was hunting for an employee who had been sent to Henrietta, Texas, to sell a wagonload of furs and had run off with the profits. It is not recorded whether Jonathan found the thief, but for the next few weeks, the little party waiting at the store made their daily repast of stale crackers and sardines.

As things returned to normal, Corwin went to work at the store, helping to outfit the cattle drovers as they came up the trail. The trail was to have many names. In Texas it was known as the Great Western, the Lone Star Trail, the Abilene and Dodge City Trail, and the Texas Cattle Trail. On the north side of the Red River, in Indian Territory, the trail was simply called the trail from Texas or the Texas Trail. As the trail passed Fort Sill, Indian Territory, and neared Kansas it became known as the Dodge City Trail.



Doan's Store was an important stop along the trail. It was a last stopping place before entering the Indian Territory. Indian Territory held many dangers and fears for the cattle drovers. Once across the Red River, the trail led over a great expanse of nearly empty, unexplored country, populated by unfriendly Indians, whiskey peddlers, and gun runners. It passed west of Forts Sill and Supply, the only sources of authority in the whole western half of the territory. Once away from them, the trail herds were on their own.

The pasture land was good on either side of the trail and on both sides of the river. Herds were often held for weeks at or near Doan's Store while their drovers prepared for the river crossing and long trek across the Indian Territory. Branding pens went up near the store. Furnaces for branding and holding corrals were built. Business boomed. Doan's Store offered everything from cartridges to Stetsons. Winchesters sold by the case; flour, sow's belly, bacon, and dried beans sold by the wagon load.

In 1879 a post office was opened at the store with Corwin Doan as postmaster. Corwin applied to the Post Office Department requesting that the little post office be named Baldwin Springs. His request was denied. The Post Office Department said that there were already too many post offices with the name of one spring or another. The request had been signed by Corwin Doan, so the postal department, without further consideration, named the post office Doan.

Early in 1880, an adobe store was built to replace the picket house. Later that year Jonathan and Calvin decided to build a new store at Eagle Flats, a budding new community several miles to the south. With their attention diverted, they sold the old store at Doan's Crossing to Corwin. He immediately put up a sign reading "C.F. DOANS AND COMPANY...good cigars and bad whiskey."

That year, two hundred thousand head of Texas longhorns forded the Red River at Doan's Crossing. To assure that no stolen cattle were being taken across into Indian Territory, the Texas Cattle Raisers Association, which had

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been formed in 1877, stationed inspectors at Doan's Store. They were to make sure no strays or unbranded cattle or cattle with brands other than those of the owners of the trail herds were to cross the Red River.

Several cabins rose at the store in 1881 as Corwin made room for his growing family and a host of employees. Shortly thereafter he built a large frame store to house supplies for his growing business.

Eighteen eighty-two brought one of the worst droughts in Texas history, but still the herds pressed on. Kept alive by scant feeding on the drought-resistant butter weed, they headed for Doan's Crossing and the railhead at Dodge City, Kansas. All the cattle in the world seemed to be coming up from Texas. They crowded around Doan's Store, choking the pens and holding corrals. Behind them, herds began backing up along the trail. That summer was one of "dry thunder," when the thunder roared and the lightning flashed out of clear skies. Lightning struck beside Doan's Store, plunging the eleven trail herds waiting to cross the river into a full stampede. It was one of the largest stampedes in Texas cattle trail history. It is recorded that it took 120 cowboys a full ten days to round up, unscramble, and reassemble the herds. It took another ten days to work them into the Red River and over Doan's Crossing.

Once across, hot weather forced the drovers to hold their herds longer in Indian Territory. That caused trouble with the Kiowas and Comanches on whose reservation land the cattle were being held. The reservation grasslands were being eaten down by the Texas cattle, and the Indians wanted compensation for it. Tempers rose as Texas drovers protested the high price the Indians set on their grasslands. P.B. Hunt, the Kiowa-Comanche Indian agent, came to the rescue. Without authorization from the commissioner of Indian affairs, he entered into a range agreement with the cattlemen and the Indians.

For the temporary privilege of ranging their trail herds on the reservation, the cattlemen were to donate a "few" steers to help augment the government's slender allowance of beef to the Indians. The arrangement worked out so well that it was used again in later years.

The Kiowas and Comaches considered the Doans their friends, and they left their reservation often to frequent Doan's Store. The friendship that those tribes showed to the Doans is remarkable. Very little trouble at their hands was ever reported at Doan's Store. Sun Boy, a lesser Kiowa chief, spent many an evening with the drovers, smoking cigars and getting drunk on old man Doan's "wagon-yard" whiskey.

A town began to spring up around the store and by 1885 boasted 300 people. It was home to the many teamsters who plied their trade hauling goods from Wichita Falls to Doan's Store. There was a wagon repair shop with a good blacksmith, a small hostelry, several "grub" houses, and a hotel of sorts, where lonely cowboys could buy some female company. An establishment for dancing and drinking called the "Cowboy Saloon" did a bang-up business.

Archives/Manuscript Division, Oklahoma Historical Society

Sun Boy, a lesser chief of the Kiowas, often left his reservation to visit and trade at Doan's Store.

The Chisholm Trail that crossed the Red River at the Red River Station began to lose some of its popularity as the land it crossed in Indian Territory became more populated. In 1888, the bulk of the cattle herds came up the Western Trail, crossing at Doan's Crossing 120 miles west of Red River Station. The future of Doan's Store and Crossing looked bright, but it was already the beginning of the end.

The trail herds were starting to slowly dwindle. The new Fort Worth and Denver Railroad bypassed Doan's Store in favor of Eagle Flats, today's Vernon, Texas, and the residents around Doan's Store began to seek greener pastures. Eventually all moved away, but Corwin Doan stayed on. He no longer sold groceries by the wagon load, and more and more he had to depend upon his farming to make a living. When the Cherokee Strip was opened to settlement in 1893, it all but killed the Great Western-Texas Cattle Trail. With homesteaders fencing off the grasslands, the cattle drovers' days were limited.

The last trail herd passed over the ford at Doan's Crossing in 1895. It has been estimated that over nineteen million cattle and a quarter of a million cowboys passed over the Red River at Doan's Crossing. Doan's Store survived into the twentieth century, becoming a gas station before its final demise. Today a granite monument marks its site. Markers have also been set on each side of Doan's Crossing of the Red River. They honor not only the crossing, but the quarter of a million working cowboys who passed this way.

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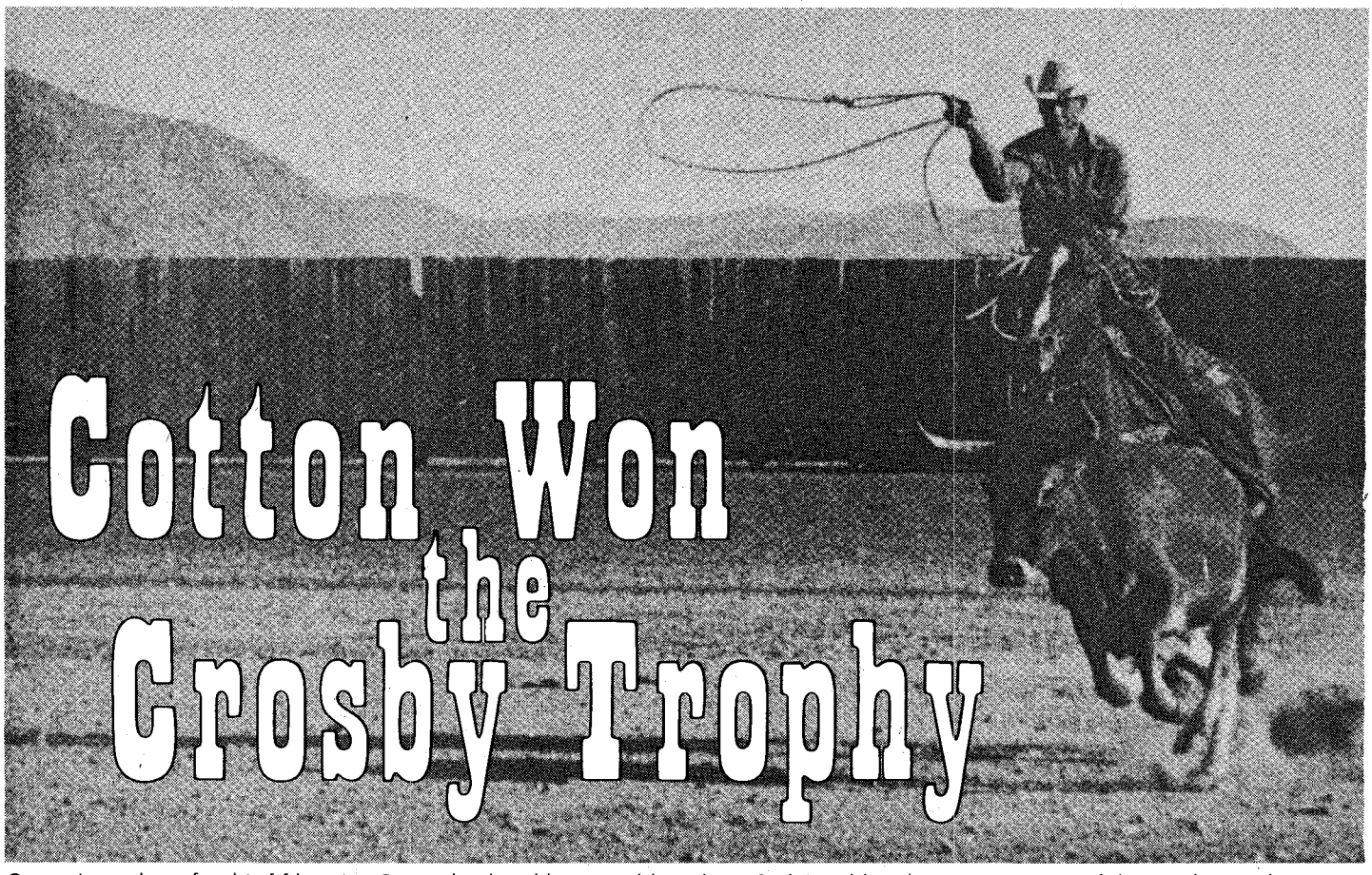

Cotton Won the Crosby Trophy

Cotton Lee takes after his fifth steer. On twelve head he was able to beat Carl Arnold and gain possession of the Crosby Trophy.

By WILLARD H. PORTER

I suppose all of us who have shepherded more years than we like to talk about look back on the rodeo game with nostalgia. In particular, there were the matched steer ropings of the 1930s through the '50s.

Those were great days when everybody took it easier, visited longer, and was not in such a big hurry to get along down the road. Competing were men like Bob Crosby, Everett Shaw, Gerald Tully, Dick Truitt, Jim Snively, Toots Mansfield, Shoat Webster, King Merritt, Carl Arnold, and Cotton Lee. Most of the contests were one-on-one. That is, a pair of ropers would compete against one another instead of among thirty or forty or more ropers as in today's competition. One of the big matches was held at Cormit Speedway, Albuquerque, New Mexico, on June 22, 1947—the day Cotton Lee won the Bob Crosby Trophy.

The Crosby Trophy, of course, was put up by Wild Horse Bob himself, following Crosby's retirement from the arena due to injuries. He would be killed in a jeep accident near his Roswell, New Mexico, ranch almost four months later to the day, October 20. The roping between Lee and Carl Arnold may have been the last one seen by the donor of the trophy.

The modest program for the Cormit Speedway roping was a single sheet of paper, folded once into four pages. The front cover headlined the event; the back cover showed a couple of ads and carried a mysterious sidebar: "The winner of the contest will be challenged to a night roping match to be held under lights in this arena Saturday night, August 2, under the same sponsorship and management." (The sponsor was the Disabled American Veterans.)

The program's centerfold had a built-in score card. If you kept a careful tally on what occurred, it would have looked something like this at the end of the activity:

Lee—20.9, 48, 30.8, 23.8, 36.6, 20.7, 23.4, 23.8, 22, 43.4, 24.3 and 30.2. Total: 347.9 seconds.

Arnold—22, 48, 25.8, 33.4, 24.6, 22.6, 38.5, 24.8, 42, 21.5, 38.8, 38.5. Total: 380.5 seconds.

The profiles of each roper went like this:

"Cotton Lee of Fort Sumner, New Mexico, is the present holder of the RAA [Rodeo Association of America] World's Single Steer Roping Championship. He has been a resident of New Mexico all his life and started in rodeo competition at the age of 14. He has participated in all the big rodeo shows in the United States. He will be riding two newly trained horses in this match and will have to rely heavily on his favorite mount, Roanie, a horse that he has reportedly refused $20,000 for. His consistent speed and accuracy with the rope has helped him defeat such outstanding starts as Bob Crosby, Jack Shaw, Gerald Tully, Buck Thompson, Jeff Good and, at an earlier date, his opponent in the match today.

"Carl Arnold of Buckeye, Arizona, is the present holder of the Bob Crosby Roping Trophy, which is at stake in the match. He has participated in eleven major matches, winning nine. He was defeated only by Bob Crosby and Toots Mansfield, and has victories over such outstanding ropers as King Merritt, Jim Brister, Ike Rude and Bob Crosby. Arnold has roped and won in every big arena in this country and has shown in England. He defeated Dick Truitt here April 27, to claim possession of the Bob

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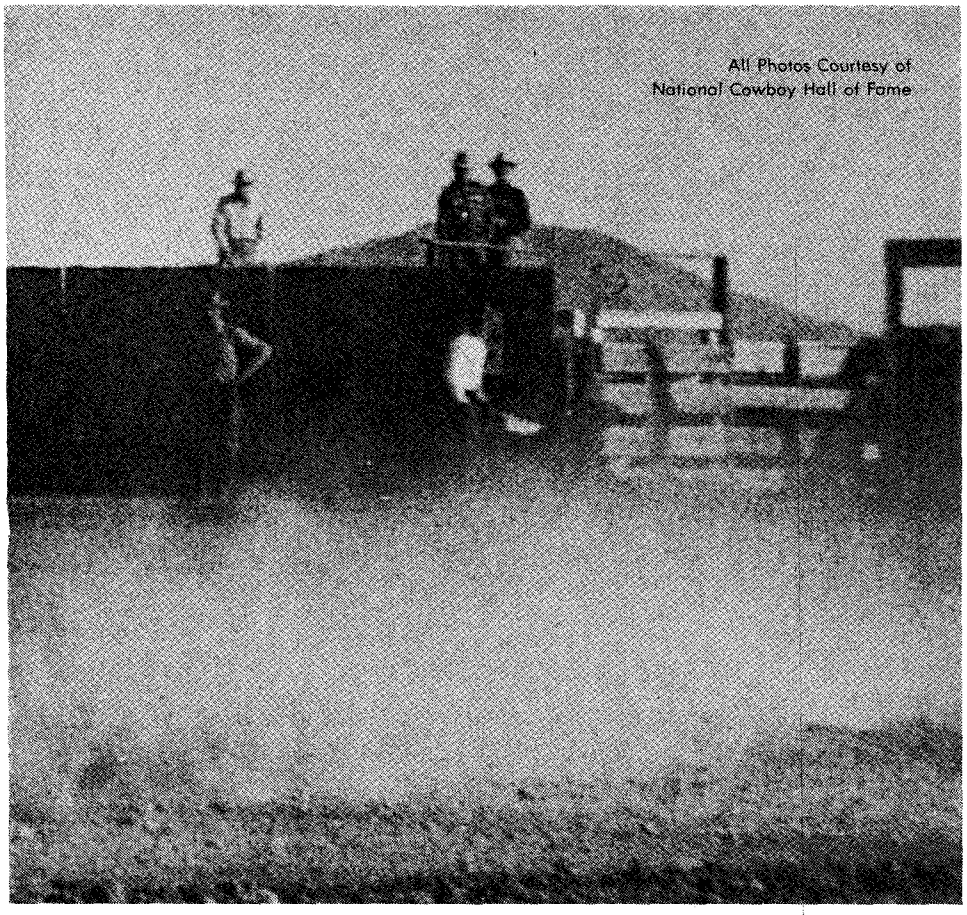

All Photos Courtesy of National Cowboy Hall of Fame

Crosby Trophy. His mounts today include the faithful Big Red, who he has used in all his previous matches; Pepper, his personally trained and favorite horse; plus a new horse named Button."

Crosby and King Merritt officiated from the sidelines, and Pat Lewis was the field judge, flagging the contestants' runs. Perhaps 1,900 fans inspected the combatants as they were introduced, each walking twice around the big arena on one horse while leading his spare horses. Those were the days when horses were interesting to the onlookers, who were mostly ex-ropers or ranchmen or horsemen of one pursuit or another. So everybody wanted to hear about the mounts. How were they bred? Where did they come from? What had they won elsewhere?

When the scene was set, the roping got under way with the holder of the trophy, Arnold, beginning his defense. He left the chute box on Pepper, a streak-face bay gelding, laced his loop around both horns, and rode hard away. The horse took the hit, lifting the steer into the air and depositing it upon the turf. Pepper dragged the steer, as he had been trained to do, to prevent its getting up.

Quick as a cat, Arnold was on the ground and racing to the bovine to make the tie with his stout piggin' string. He strung a foreleg, hefted the hind legs over the secured leg, and took two wraps, finishing the tie off with a half hitch. He raised his arms, signaling that the job was done.

"Twenty-two seconds flat!" the announcer intoned. It was a fast run, a neat way to warm up the crowd. They hollered and clapped their hands. Then it was the challenger's turn.

He had elected to start on the sorrel gelding, Corky, owned jointly by Red Davis and Gerald Tully. With no hesitation, Lee duplicated the maneuvers of his adversary—only better and faster. All the cowboy that Cotton Lee had inside him helped with the speedy 20.9. If the crowd had been noisy before, now it was wild with applause. What a way to

Carl Arnold is shown wrapping the legs of his sixth steer, an animal he secured in the remarkable time of 22.6.

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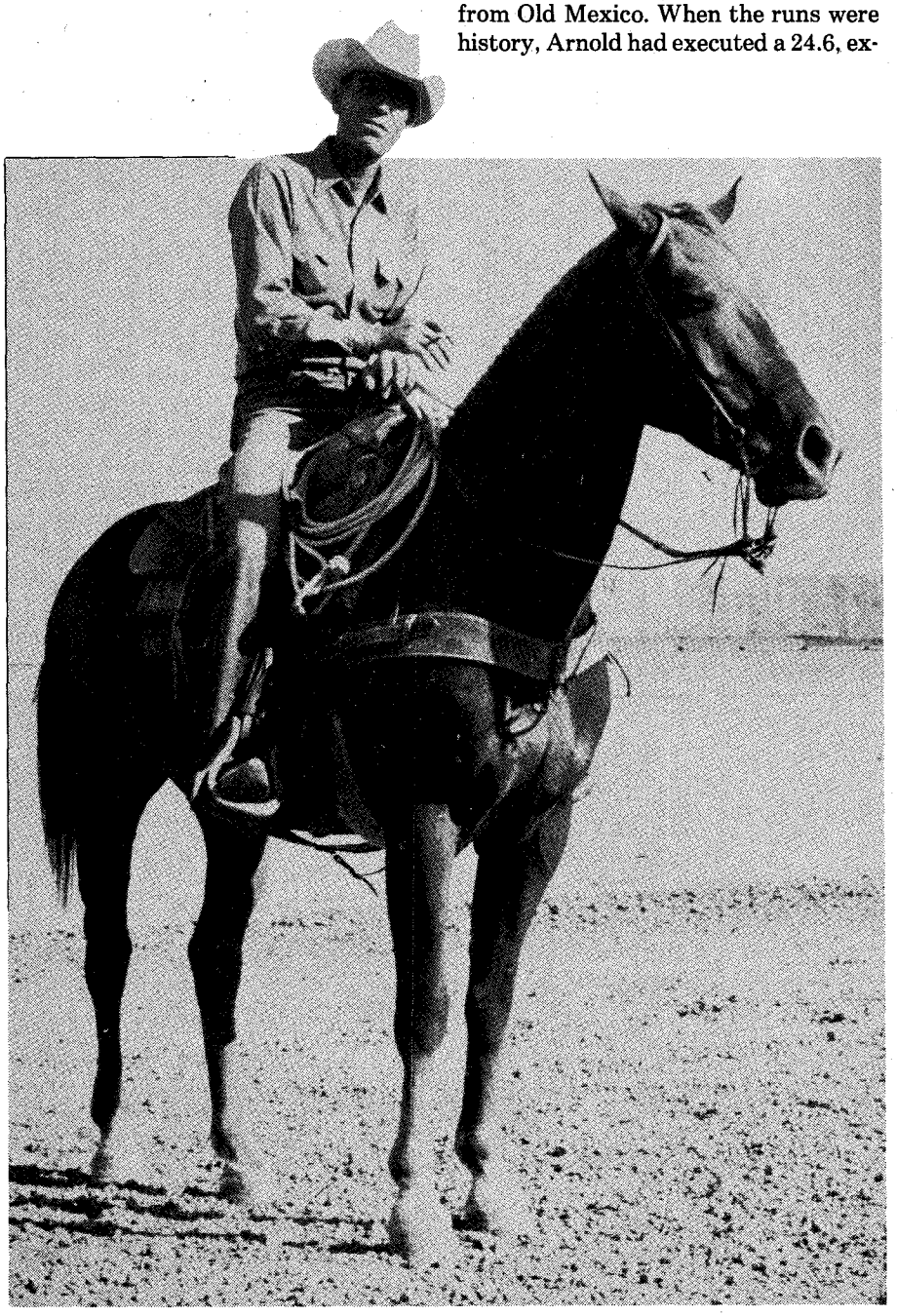
get a championship match going: two fast runs, leaving the challenger 1.1 seconds ahead!

On the second run from the box, each roper had trouble with his steer. Arnold's wouldn't lay, and Lee's had to be tripped twice. Oddly enough, the boys' times on those runs caught identical stopwatch readings—48 seconds. They were the worst times for each contestant; the cowboys were glad to get them over with.

Their horses had to work extra hard on that second pair of recalcitrant steers, so on their third runs both men changed horses. Arnold went to another bay, Buster; Lee mounted Joe Buck, a powerful dun gelding that was later campaigned by Jiggs Burk. Arnold's time was 25.8, and Lee took 30.8, leaving the trophy holder ahead of the challenger by a few seconds. The same horses were used on the fourth steers, situations that gave Arnold a 33.4 run compared to Lee's 23.8. Now the challenger went into the lead by a few seconds' margin.

For the fifth go-round, Arnold and Lee again changed horses. The Arizonan saddled up his stout standby, Big Red, one of the best steer roping horses in the game, and the New Mexican went to his own red gelding, the sorrel Cortez. Out of the box they raced, giving chase to the big, horned steers from Old Mexico. When the runs were history, Arnold had executed a 24.6, exactly ten seconds faster than Lee. So going to the mid-way steer, the champ was 6.3 seconds ahead of his rival.



Cotton Lee, every inch a cowboy, took the Crosby Trophy away from Carl Arnold that afternoon in Albuquerque.

Officials at the Cormit Speedway roping contest were (left to right) King Merritt, Wyoming rancher and steer roper; Bob

The sixth run would be an important one, and each boy knew it. The middle steer of any championship roping match is always crucial. A fellow can get well if he's behind, or he can hold what lead he has if he's ahead. So it was that June day at Albuquerque in 1947, when Carl Arnold and Cotton Lee were competing for the Crosby Trophy.

Arnold's best on that run, his second fastest of the match, was 22.6. But Lee ripped off a 20.7, the fastest execution of the day. With six behind them and six to go, Arnold was ahead by 4.4. However, this was to be the last time he would have the lead.

On his seventh run from the box, Arnold drew a bad steer, a ducking, dodging runner, and missed with a first loop. Allowing the empty loop to drag out behind, he snatched loose his second, or spare, rope and built another loop. (In competition, spare ropes are carried, made fast to the saddle pommel by a couple of wraps of light string.

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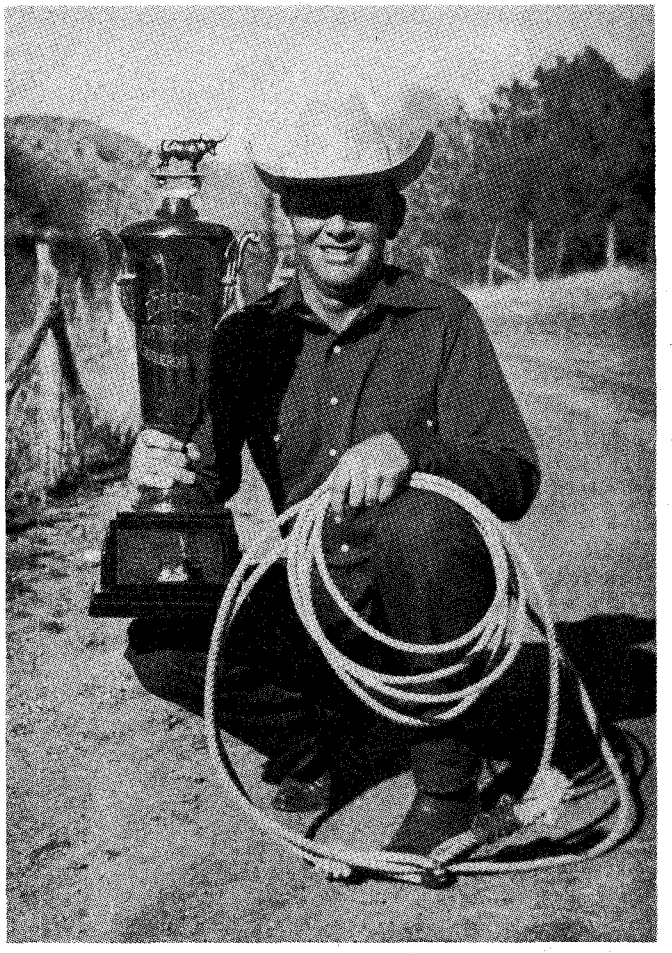
Crosby, steer roper and donor of the trophy; and Pat Lewis, rodeo roper from House, New Mexico, who flagged the contest.



Gerald Tully, today in his eighties and living at Glencoe, New Mexico, is holder of the Bob Crosby Trophy.

They can be grabbed and broken loose very quickly.) Arnold's second throw found the hard, smooth keratin of the horns, but his time was slow, 38.5. Lee responded with a 23.4 run, placing him a solid 10.7 seconds ahead of his opponent.

They were close on the eighth steer—Arnold's 24.8 to Lee's 23.8—two speedy runs that increased the latter's lead by exactly one second.

ON HIS NINTH go, when Arnold's backers were hoping that he could get back into the match, the owner of the trophy had even more trouble. Not only did he miss with another first loop, but it also took two trips to subdue the steer. His time was a poor 42 flat, compared to another good Lee run of 22 flat. With three steers left, the rivalry was heavily weighted in Lee's favor. He was 31.7 seconds ahead. For Arnold it looked dismal.

The tenth run was crucial and, as is so often the case, the crowd stirred with anticipation. They knew that a steer roping is never over until the last animal is secured. And the more knowledgeable fans asked themselves whether the horses would hold up. Both competitors were still on the change-over mounts they had switched to on the fifth runs. They would use the same horses to the finish.

Arnold's tenth steer ran straight-away from the chute, giving the contestant a splendid shot. He caught both horns, jerked back the slack in the rope, waved a trip around the bovine's rump between the hock and the right hip bone, and rode hard away. The steer was lofted into the air and deposited on the turf. As Big Red pulled forward, holding the steer flat, Arnold dismounted and tied in 21.5. Backers let him know how much they appreciated the run, fastest of the day for Arnold, third fastest of the match.

Lee responded by missing his steer with a first loop, getting into still more trouble with a second loop, and taking a long 43.4, a time that still left him 9.8 seconds ahead. His backers didn't worry very long, because it was all in Cotton Lee's camp on the last two head. Arnold went 38.8 and 38.5, taking the pressure off his rival so that all he had to do was go out there, relaxed and confident, and rope and tie in 24.3 and 30.2, giving him a twelve-steer victory margin of 32.6. Also, let's not forget, it gave him temporary possession of the Bob Crosby Trophy.

As the years went by, matches of this kind became less and less popular. The old boys who competed in them began to lose interest or die off. Younger cowboys stayed with the rodeo events or entered the big contests where, instead of two ropers competing head-to-head, there could be as many as thirty or forty competitors. Crosby himself, you'll remember, had been killed.

The glamour and glory of roping one-on-one for the Crosby Trophy waned. The last person who won it, Gerald Tully of the Hat T Ranch at Glencoe, New Mexico, still has it. Today Tully is in his eighties, a steer roper of the old school, one who roped, tripped, and tied with the best of them several decades back.

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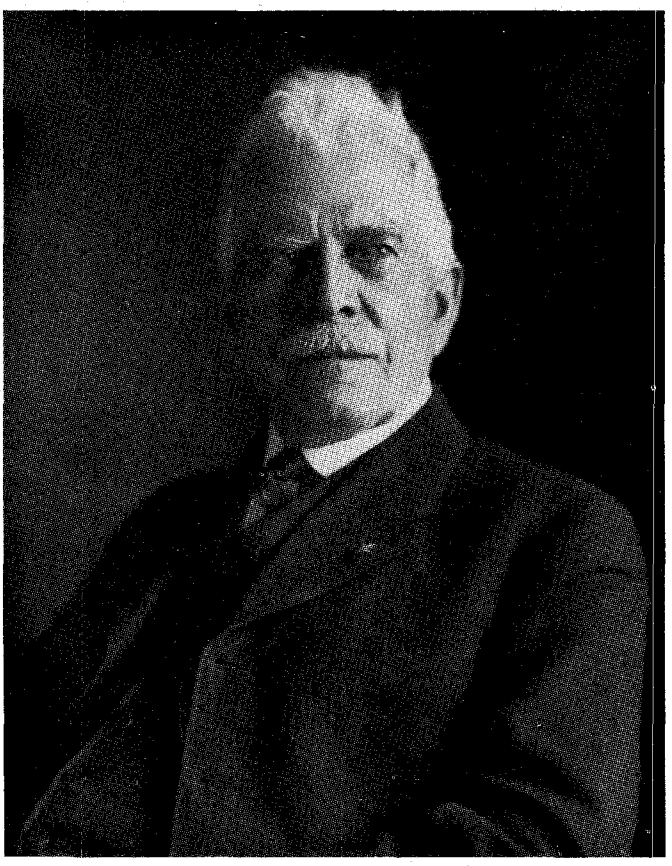
The Private War of White Hair McLaughlin

By JULIANA CLAYTON

Photos Courtesy of North Dakota State Historical Society

On December 12, 1890, the mutilated and bloodied remains of Sitting Bull, one of the great chiefs of the Sioux Nation, were lowered into an inglorious grave in the cemetery of Fort Yates, signifying not only the death of a remarkable man, but the end of an era. There were no mourners present, but one man in a small official group standing by the graveside that bright winter day entertained a unique satisfaction at the Indian's demise.

On July 1, 1871, James McLaughlin entered the U.S. Indian Service as assistant agent to Maj. W.H. Forbes at the Devils Lake Agency in North Dakota. When Forbes died five years later, the twenty-nine-year-old McLaughlin, a Canadian of Scotch-Irish descent, was made his successor. After five more years at Devils Lake, he was transferred to the important Standing Rock Agency at Fort Yates. There he was to manage an average of six thousand Sioux, many of them restless and hostile as a result of starvation and various other injustices.



Indian agent James McLaughlin.

Among the most rebellious of his charges, McLaughlin found the legendary Sitting Bull, newly arrived from self-exile in Canada and camped with his people under armed guard. The chief had long enjoyed power and status among the Sioux, due greatly to his dedication to ancestral beliefs and a gift for spiritual eloquence. He had ever eschewed the influence of the whites and refused to sign their treaties. It was widely held by his people that Sitting Bull's supernatural abilities had much to do with their success at the battle of the Little Big Horn. At fifty years of age, his presence on the agency was attributable only to the utter defeat wrought upon him over a period of years by hunger and the incessant pursuit by U.S. troops.

Almost immediately upon his arrival at Standing Rock, McLaughlin perceived that the future of the Sioux would have to involve the suppression of all elements of Indian culture. He intended to teach them to become tillers of the soil, convinced that stock-raising would only serve to confirm their nomadic existence. The children would be placed in schools and encouraged in the ways of the whites. He gained the support of certain influential Indians and in a relatively short time found many of the Sioux children in school. One powerful obstacle, however, stood firmly between McLaughlin and his march toward the elimination of the old ways of the Sioux—Sitting Bull, chief of the Hunkpapas.

The initial spark of opposition was fanned by a series of conflicts between the two men. One disagreement involved Sitting Bull's refusal to join the Catholic Church. McLaughlin, or "White Hair" as the Indians called him, was an avid Catholic and was making an effort to convert all his Indians to Catholicism as a further means of "civilizing" them. McLaughlin sent Sitting Bull's brother-in-law, Grey Eagle (already a convert), to put pressure on the chief to join the church. Sitting Bull listened to everything Grey Eagle had to say, then replied that he could not give up his old ways and beliefs. Grey Eagle grew angry and told him that if he would not obey the agent's wishes, they could no longer be friends. After that, Sitting Bull turned even more stubbornly to the old tribal ways, keeping to the remote portions of the reservation and seldom visiting the agency at Fort Yates.

On one of his rare visits to the agency, it seems the Indian further antagonized McLaughlin by prophesying rain on a hot summer day in June. The Indians had suffered a year of drought which had brought failure to their agricultural pursuits and subsequent hunger. Already to White Hair's dismay, Sitting Bull had accurately predicted the drought. Now, on a cloudless day, he predicted rain and proceeded to chant and pray not far from the agency headquarters. McLaughlin and his mixed-blood wife, Mary, openly laughed at him. That afternoon, to the amazement of several white bystanders, a thunderhead built up out of the northern sky. Soon it began to rain.

Mary McLaughlin, White Hair's wife,

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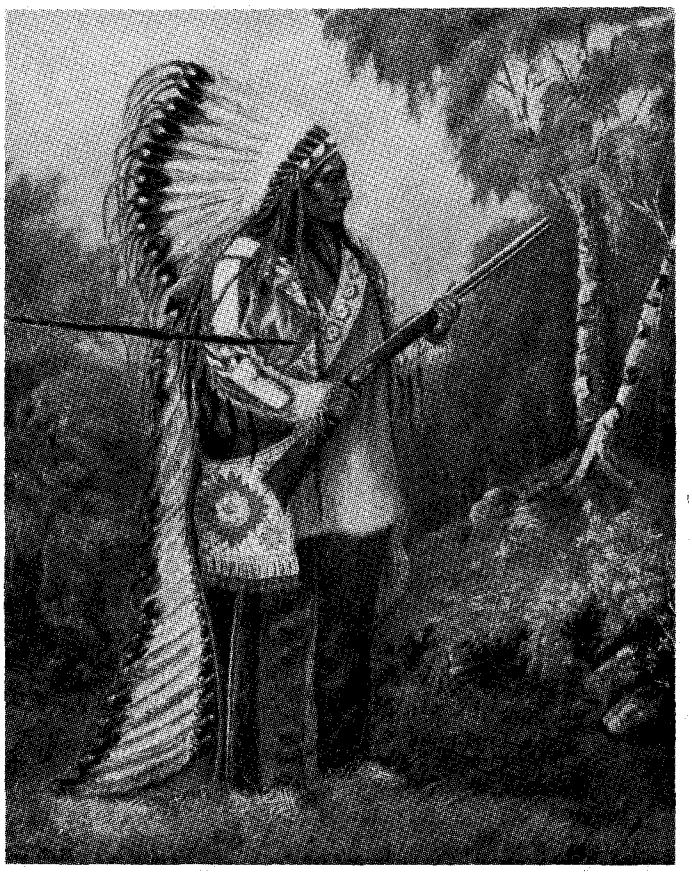
was behind some of her husband's hostility toward Sitting Bull. Mary continually sought to rise above the stigma of her Indian blood. She was half Santee Sioux, the woodland branch of the Sioux tribe. Because of her background, she felt she was refused what she saw as her rightful place among the officers' wives at Fort Yates. More than anything, she wanted to do away with the taint on her husband's reputation as being a "squaw man." When Sitting Bull refused to join Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show for the 1887 tour of Europe, Mary felt she had been cheated of the opportunity to go along as his interpreter, which would have elevated her social status substantially.

Another incident pitting the two men against one another involved McLaughlin's attempts to break up the Sioux families that included plural wives. He demanded that Sitting Bull give up one of his two wives, Seen-By-Her-Nation and Four Times. Sitting Bull sensibly asked the agent which wife he should get rid of and who would be father to his children if he gave up either one of them. He told McLaughlin that if the agent could find him a white wife, he would give up both Indian wives. The bargain was intended as a joke, but McLaughlin viewed it as proof that Sitting Bull was a vile and salacious old savage.

The breach between the agent and chief was unwittingly broadened by a Mrs. Catherine Weldon of Brooklyn, New York. Mrs. Weldon was a field representative for the National Indian Defense Association, which sought to alleviate the entire Indian predicament but succeeded only in supplementing inadequate government rations. When Mrs. Weldon met Sitting Bull in 1889, she devoted herself entirely to his personal welfare. She had several quarrels about the aging chief with White Hair, who insisted on calling the Indian "a coward, a selfish man, no one's friend." She set herself firmly on Sitting Bull's side in the intensifying feud, going so far as to move in with him and his two wives. Mrs. Weldon shared the burden of even the most menial housework with the two women, who quickly became jealous of her. Rumors flew among the whites at Fort Yates that the middle-aged woman was pregnant with the chief's child. This was untrue, but by performing wifely acts for Sitting Bull, she unknowingly expressed her willingness to marry him. When he suggested an intimate relationship between them, she was shocked and hurt, accusing the Indian of repaying her friendship with lechery. She stayed on, however, unwilling to abandon her charge in the face of McLaughlin's potent dislike.



Catherine Weldon's portrait of Sitting Bull.

When Sitting Bull decided to travel to Cheyenne River to hear Kicking Bear's stories of the new religion of Ghost Dancing, he was denied permission to leave the reservation, although he applied to McLaughlin several times. Mrs. Weldon came to the rescue, offering to take him there. As they approached the agent's office in their wagon, McLaughlin came out on the steps, knowing full well what they were up to. The agent and Catherine Weldon had a harsh exchange of words, which resulted in her being escorted by Indian policemen to the northern boundary of the reservation. She was told summarily to stay away from the chief. Not to be undone, she took up residence in an abandoned log cabin near the boundary, making herself available to visits from Sitting Bull. He came once every two weeks, a 140-mile trip from his camp, always bringing one of his wives in a display of propriety.

During this time, a growing interest in the Ghost Dance religion was making the military uneasy; officials feared it foreshadowed another uprising. In truth, the religion was similar to Christianity in its espousal of brotherly love and nonviolence. It was based on the belief of the earth's imminent renewal, during which all Indian ancestors would return and white settlement would recede like a tide. The disruptive

Standing Rock Agency.

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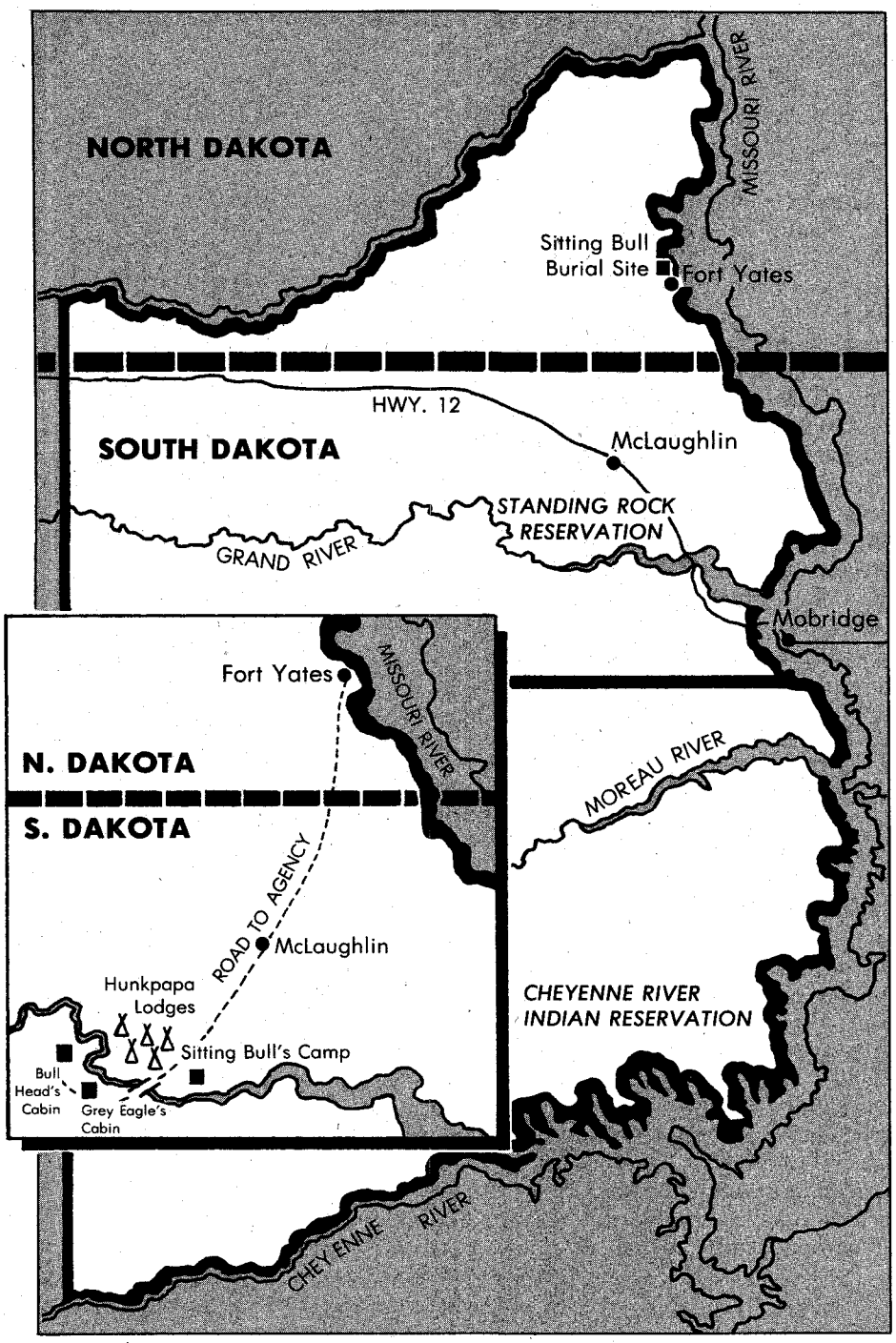

influence of the religion extended only to the abandonment of farms and schools, the Indians having found a new and more satisfying way to cope with the changes in their world.

McLaughlin did not see anything terribly menacing in the religion. He merely saw it as another deterrent to his program of civilization and as an opportunity to rid himself of the recalcitrant Indian leaders who continued to plague him. He submitted a list of potential troublemakers, insisting that Sitting Bull was the "high priest" of the Ghost Dance movement at Standing Rock. That was a gross overstatement, as Sitting Bull had ceased any attempt at dancing, finding that he had received no revelation. He was simply tolerant of the faith, well aware that his people needed an incentive to survive. The Indian went so far as to tell McLaughlin that he had nothing to do with the spread of the dancing and even offered to go in search of the returning ancestors. If they found no proof of the expected "New Messiah" or the reborn ancestors, Sitting Bull would personally put a stop to the dancing. If, however, they found proof, then McLaughlin would allow the dancing to continue. White Hair refused the bargain, and soon after the chief renounced his faith in the dancing, claiming that it belonged to the western tribes and not the Sioux. Nonetheless, McLaughlin would later write that the new religion of the Standing Rock Sioux was managed by Sitting Bull from the beginning as an effort to regain his lost influence and reestablish himself as leader.

In late autumn of 1890, Washington sent orders to the army to take up strategic positions and prepare to put down any insurrection. McLaughlin wanted Sitting Bull arrested as a "safety measure," but he was temporarily thwarted by a dispute over whether the arrest should be carried out by military or civil authority. In an effort to resolve the situation and somewhat prompted by a disdain for all Indian agents, Gen. Nelson Miles sent for Buffalo Bill Cody, an old friend of the chief. Miles' plan was to have the showman entice Sitting Bull to attend a conference in Chicago. It remains unclear whether Cody knew he would be escorting the Indian to a military prison, although bringing the famous chief into custody would have offered an unprecedented publicity coup for him.

When McLaughlin discovered the general's plans, he was outraged by the apparent infringement on his authority. He persuaded Washington to renounce the scheme. Indian riders, acting under McLaughlin's instructions, overtook Cody's wagon en route to the chief's camp and managed to delay him until the agent could notify him that the arrest order had been rescinded. Cody left Standing Rock without ever having seen Sitting Bull.

Finally, on December 12, 1890, Lt. Col. William F. Drum received orders from General Miles to "secure the person of Sitting Bull" and to request the cooperation and assistance of Indian Agent McLaughlin. White Hair persuaded Drum to allow the actual arrest to be made by Indian troops, thereby giving the agency credit for the action. On Sunday, December 14, the order to proceed with the arrest was dispatched. McLaughlin appointed Lt. Henry Bull Head, a Sioux, to head the arresting party of forty-three Indian policemen. He then arranged for a great deal of whiskey to be made available to the men, knowing it would bolster their courage. They gathered at Bull Head's cabin across the river from Sitting Bull's camp.

An hour before dawn on the fifteenth, the policemen moved out. Six or seven of them entered Sitting Bull's cabin, immediately taking possession of his firearms and knives and physically overpowering him. He was told that he was

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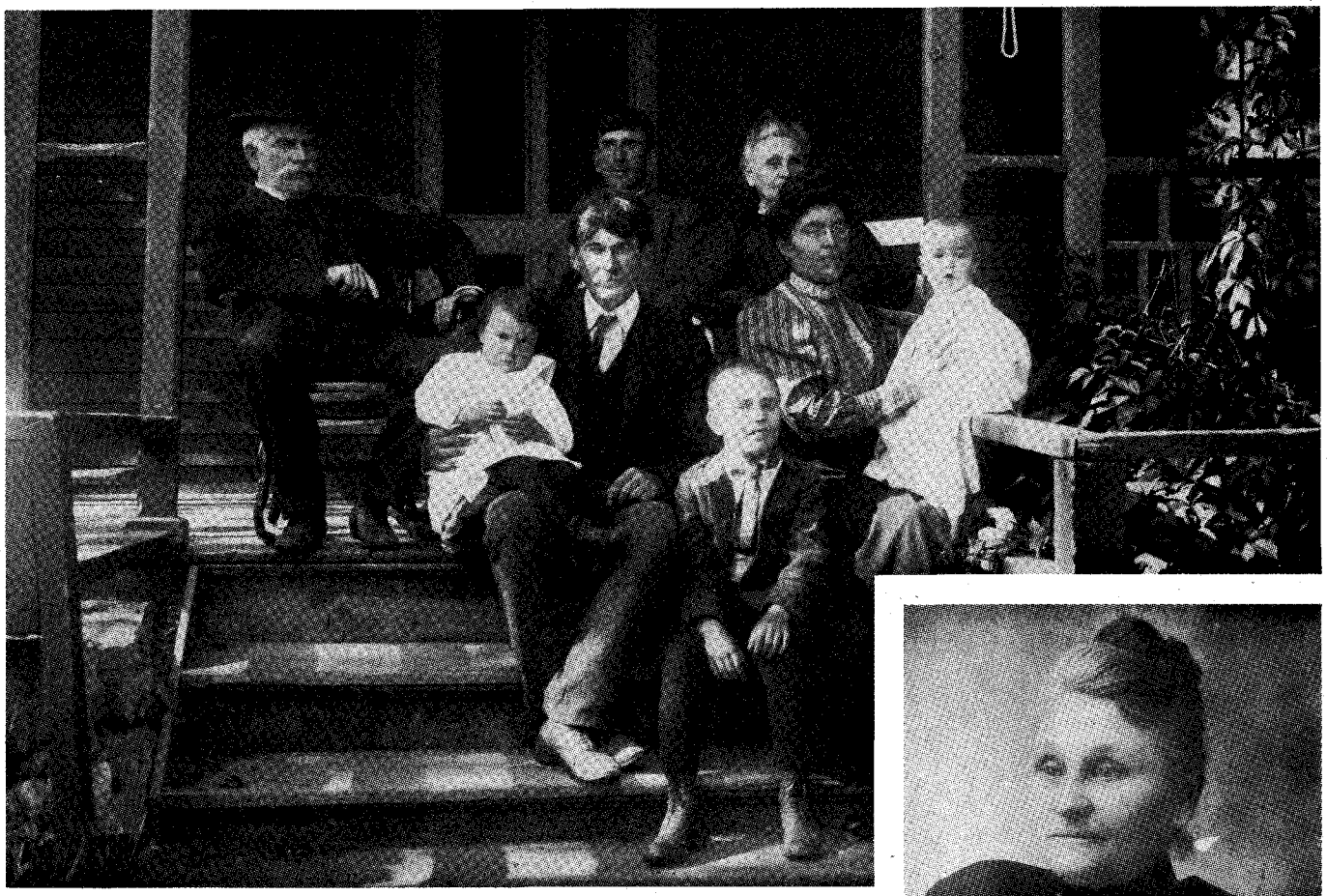

The James McLaughlin family at Fort Yates, North Dakota.

Mary McLaughlin's mixed blood contributed to her husband's feud with Sitting Bull.

under arrest and that he must go with them. He was agreeable, showing no trace of hostility or excitement. As he had slept naked, he asked to be allowed to dress, but the policemen were hesitant to release him so that he could do so. They made an effort to dress him while keeping his arms pinioned, then dragged him toward the door half-clothed.

At the thought of the indignity of appearing before the gathering crowd in such a state, he rebelled, but was ultimately forced into the chilly dawn. When he saw that his brother-in-law, Grey Eagle, was among his enemies, Sitting Bull became infuriated, crying out that he refused to go anywhere. As they forced him toward a horse, a friend and supporter of the chief, Catch-the-Bear, rounded the corner of the cabin and produced a Winchester from under his blanket. He began insulting Bull Head and demanding that he let Sitting Bull go. The old Indian once again loudly announced that he would not go with the policemen. At that, Catch-the-Bear raised his rifle and shot Bull Head in the leg.

The lieutenant twisted as he fell and fired his revolver not at Catch-the-Bear, but at Sitting Bull, the bullet lodging in the chief's chest. As Sitting Bull went down, a policeman named Red Tomahawk shot him in the head from behind. Either shot would have been fatal. General fighting broke out and before a cavalry detachment could arrive at the scene, six policeman and eight of Sitting Bull's followers were dead.

Once the fighting was over, the Indian policemen and white troopers ransacked the camp, securing everything of value, including livestock. Most of the loot was later turned over to the McLaughlins, who profited nicely from displaying the souvenirs. As the day wore on, friends and relatives of the dead policemen began abusing the bodies of Sitting Bull and his followers. One Indian bashed the dead chief's face into pulp with a neck yoke until his lower jaw was barely attached. When they were finished, they loaded the bodies into a wagon and brought Sitting Bull to McLaughlin. The agent showed no remorse at the passing of his nemesis, stating, "The shots that killed Sitting Bull have put a stop forever to the domination of the ancient regime among the Standing Rock Sioux."

Sitting Bull of the Hunkpapas was buried in a crude pine box in a remote corner of the Fort Yates cemetery, his features no longer recognizable, his body gashed and broken. A sigh of relief went through the surrounding white communities at the news of his death. James "White Hair" McLaughlin lived until July 28, 1923. He was widely respected as an authority on Indians and frequently served as a negotiator among various Indian tribes. In 1910, he published a book entitled *My Friend The Indian.*

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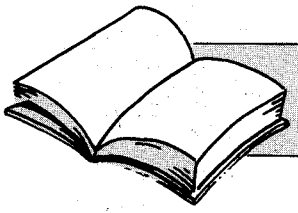

Books

Pioneer Memories

THE SOUTH PLATTE TRAIL: STORY OF COLORADO'S FORGOTTEN PEOPLE. *By Nell Brown Propst. Pruett Publishing Company, 2928 Pearl Street, Boulder, Colorado 80301. $15.95 paper bound.*

Nell Brown Propst has done for northeastern Colorado what John Rolfe Burroughs in *Where the Old West Stayed Young* did for northwestern Colorado. On the back cover Ralph Edwards says Propst tells the story better than James Michener, but that is like comparing apples to oranges.

Michener, with his large staff, always did a great deal of research that was used to give verisimilitude to a story essentially fiction. Probst has used forty years of research and collecting memorabilia to bring alive the history of an area she was born to, loved, and lived in. The material gathered in this research and collecting is the story, factual, actual, and down to earth—just as it was recalled and recounted by real people.

It is truly gratifying to find such a book so carefully organized in chronological and developmental stages. Propst leads us from the Indians and the first Spanish incursions, through the fur trade, and on to the California-Oregon westward movement, with the concomitant beginning of settling along the South Platte River. Skillfully and always interestingly she carries us from travois to airplanes, along trails and events comprising a portion of our Manifest Destiny that has been sadly overlooked because it lacked the scope and abundance of chroniclers of the gold rush or the race for land in Oregon.

Propst's artful rhetoric leaves nothing to be desired. It is above ordinary and often so true to the times and the people you almost believe you are sitting in the living area of a settler's soddy, listening to tales before a fire of buffalo chips glowing in the fireplace.

The North Fork of the Platte River heads in Colorado's North Park; the South Fork in South Park. At their sources they are only about 150 miles apart but each runs its own course to their confluence near North Platte, Nebraska, to become the Platte River. Compared to most of America's major rivers, the Platte is hardly more than a trickle. But no river has been more useful in sustaining America's march to the Pacific. No river has contributed more toward changing the high semi-arid plains into a rich productive agricultural and livestock food producer for our millions of people.

The "Tide of Empire" moved up the North Platte in its race for California gold and Oregon land. A few hardy souls took the South Platte Trail to settle along a river that was "too thick to drink, too thin to plow, too shallow to sail on, too broad to shoot a rifle across." From the South Platte to the Arkansas River was one vast pasture that sustained millions of buffalo. They came to the South Platte during migration, and they kept all the trees and shrubs beaten down so the river flowed between treeless banks of grass over a bottom of quicksand.

It was a cattleman's paradise, and in wet years or under irrigation wondrous crops could be produced. There was no timber to build homes, but there was abundant sod, so it was used to build soddies, cool in summer, warm in winter, and stout enough to withstand the raging winter blizzards. On the prairies lay millions of buffalo chips for fuel. If the crops were not ruined by floods, drought, hot winds, hail, grasshoppers or trampled in the dirt by buffalo or stampeding cattle, there was plentiful food. Otherwise, the people made do with buffalo or antelope meat.

All this Nell Propst makes *real*, just as she does the Indian raids and killings and the demands made by a Nature that was seldom gentle. It is a story of blizzards and dust storms and hard times during national depressions, a story of widely separated homes, isolated from neighbors by miles of nothing. The Homestead Act of 1862 brought the development of irrigation projects, and finally the discovery of a great river of water millions of years in the making flowing below the surface streambed; the valley came into its own. With the buffalo gone, the Indians on reservations, and the cattle controlled by barbed wire, cottonwood trees, willows and other shrub and forb plants grew rampant.

This is a tale of heroic proportions told by those who were there. They did not think of themselves as heroes, and they told their stories among themselves accordingly. Thus the reader appreciates their heroism even more. Readers of *True West* and *Old West* will especially like this book. It is their kind of literature.—*John Norwood, Arvada, Colorado.*

Multi-faceted Texans

TURN YOUR EYES TOWARD TEXAS: PIONEERS SAM AND MARY MAVERICK. *By Paula Mitchell Marks. Texas A&M University Press, Drawer C, College Station, Texas 77843. $27.50 cloth bound.*

Most Americans are familiar with the word "maverick." It basically refers to a motherless calf or an unbranded steer. Today a maverick is a person who takes an independent stand apart from his associates. Everybody knows at least two or three mavericks and maybe qualifies as one himself. What we don't generally realize is that the name originated with Samuel Maverick (1803–1870), a Texas phenomenon.

After Sam Maverick purchased land all over the state, much of his livestock ran loose and wild in the Rio Grande underbrush. When cowboys encountered an unbranded steer, they said "this one's a Maverick." A legend had started.

Maverick was more than just an independent cattleman, however. And his wife, Mary, was more than just a housewife. He was involved in politics, Indian battles, the Alamo, the Mexican War, the Civil War, and empire. Mary raised a family practically alone, grew in spiritual maturity, advised her husband, supported the community, and like her husband, left a wealth of personal papers. One can hardly write, or even understand, the early history of Texas without consulting these fascinating records.

This 323-page hardcover book, complete with notes, index, bibliography, and photos, opens with the Mavericks arriving in Texas as colonists with Stephen F. Austin. It closes with an assessment of a family's life: ten pregnancies and six children who grew

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to maturity, a family living like Quakers and yet wealthy by standards of the day, a family circle that enriched Texas by its services and its blood.

In the end, the Mavericks blended into the Texas myth, leaving the author to set the record straight with her sober, well written and researched history. Maverick will still have his future biographers, of course, but none more competent than Marks.—Leon C. Metz, *El Paso, Texas.*

Alive With Spirits

THE SPIRIT OF NATIVE AMERICA. *By Anna Lee Walters. Chronicle Books, 275 Fifth Street, San Francisco, California 94103. $30.00 cloth bound, $16.95 paper bound.*

Anna Walters, an Oto-Pawnee, is the ideal writer to interpret the beauty and mysticism of American Indian art represented by the David T. Vernon Collection, now on permanent exhibit at Grand Teton National Park's Colter Bay visitors center. She analyzes the meaning of baskets, warbonnets, parfleches, masks, cradleboards and moccasins, and integrates what we non-Indians would call "art objects" into the proper tribal perspective. For religious (or, better, spiritual) and artistic values are not sharply segregated from the commonplace of daily Indian life.

The artifacts themselves are handsomely reproduced in color photos and are joined by a selection of historical black and white photographs by E.S. Curtis. An extra treat is the group of superb full-color photos of landscapes—scenes associated with the subject matter. 'Tis a beautiful volume and, as the author herself says, "This book is alive with spirits."—*Richard Dillon, Mill Valley, California.*

Forgotten Corner of the Southwest

HISTORICAL ATLAS OF ARKANSAS. *By Gerald T. Hanson and Carl. H. Moneyhom. University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Ave., Norman, Oklahoma 73019. $29.95 cloth bound.*

The newest title in Oklahoma's first-rate atlas series treats Arkansas, a "transitional" state which, like Missouri, is often neglected by writers and readers of Southwestern Americana alike. Although the region is dominated by the Appalachia-like Ozarks, the Arkansas River provided a natural highway to the West for early travelers. Arkansas became the jumping-off place for early military and scientific expeditions, the site of important military installations like Arkansas Post and Fort Smith, and the supplier of posts farther west, like Oklahoma's Forts Gibson and Towson.

As always, the excellent maps are well interpreted by text. The settlement pattern of Indian tribes—Caddoes, Osages, etc.—is dealt with thoroughly, as are exploration and Civil War battles, like the surprising victory of Curtis over Van Dorn at the "Gettysburg of the West," Pea Ridge. The amount and variety of information is impressive, and even experts in Arkansas history may be surprised to find, for example, how many Spanish land grants were made there—and to Americans!—*Richard Dillon, Mill Valley, California.*

Military Sidebar

FORT MILLER, CALIFORNIA, 1851-1865. *By Bertina Richter. Peter Lang, 62 West 45th Street, New York, New York 10036. $34.50 cloth bound.*

A Fresno State University librarian has finally "excavated" California's long-lost Fort Miller in the dry foothills of the Sierra Nevada via a fine historiographical dig. The obscure post, soon joined by a rough mining camp, Millerton, succeeded nearby Camp Barbour on the middle San Joaquin River above the San Joaquin Valley after the Mariposa War of 1851. Its job was to pacify the Indians of Yosemite Valley and the surrounding sierra. It did so with little incident other than expeditions to Yosemite Valley and Mono Lake in 1852 and the Tule River in 1856, and it also kept a wary eye on Copperheads or Secesh—Confederate sympathizers—during the Civil War years. Alas, even the old post's site is lost to us (except, perhaps, scuba divers) on the bottom of Millerton Lake behind Friant Dam.

The Fort Miller story is only a sidebar to the West's military history, but an

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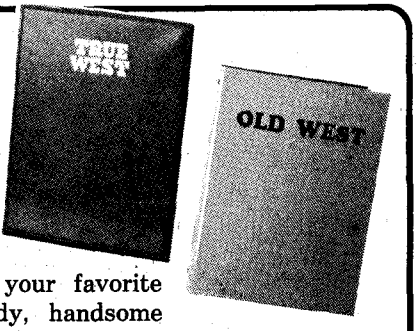

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interesting one. Richter has done a bang-up job of research, narration, and documentation, correcting many long-held errors. The volume is from a new publisher in a series called Regional Studies.—*Richard Dillon, Mill Valley, California.*

Raised in the Boom Towns

OIL FIELD CHILD. *By Estha Briscoe Stowe. Texas Christian University Press, % Texas A&M University Press, Drawer C, College Station, Texas 77843. $13.95 paper bound.*

"Every drop of oil that flows from the ground brings a corresponding drop of rain from the sky," is an oil-field adage Estha Briscoe Stowe repeats in her recollections of the oil fields where she was raised. Her story begins in 1921, when she was a five-year-old in Mexia, Texas. From that time on she moved with her family to the boom towns of Wortham, Santa Rita, McCamey, Crane, Wink, and Odessa. They also spent some time in Oklahoma oil fields.

Stowe tells her story easily, recording events and surroundings in the oil patches as she witnessed them while growing up. There were heartbreaking periods, such as when her mother was diagnosed as consumptive and had to spend several months in a tuberculosis sanitorium. Nine-year-old Estha spent much of that time out in the oil field in their Star touring car with open sides and a black waterproof top. She entertained herself while her father worked his shift.

Other tragedies occurred. Her father nearly died from fumes he inhaled while gauging an oil tank. A man who had been her friend was blown to pieces when a boiler exploded. In Crane there were sandstorms during March and April; then in mid-summer the valley was hit by a flash flood. Every tent except the Briscoes' was wiped out by a six-foot-high wall of water.

"Nobody in 1927 had heard of disaster relief," Stowe recalls. "These people had to pick themselves up and start over." Her parents provided shelter and loaned money to many of the homeless. Every cent was eventually returned by grateful families.

Old timers in the oil fields and history buffs will appreciate the photographs of oil rigs and Stowe's description of Santa Rita No. 1 in the summer of 1925. "Dotted over the landscape in every direction stood the familiar gridwork of wooden oil derricks with their long belt houses, each ending in a square engine house. The walking beams moved up and down rhythmically. The familiar slush pits, bull wheels, boilers and batteries of tanks were visible, too." It looked like all the other oil fields she had seen, "except for the tall torches that burned all over the field."

The Briscoes arrived in McCamey in 1926, about eight months after the discovery well was brought under control.

In 1928 they were living in the Winkler County sandhills where wildcat wells were being drilled all over. When one of the wells burned for days, Word "Tex" Thornton was called in to put it out. He passed his expertise in fighting oil well fires on to the men who are in that risky business today.

Although the 1920s and '30s may not be as long removed as the pioneer days, Estha Briscoe Stowe has drawn on her remarkable memory to present a clear, detailed picture of life in the early Texas oil fields. It may not be an especially fast-moving account, but it is fascinating and inspirational.

This seventh book in the Chisholm Trail series fulfills the publisher's purpose to preserve Texas history and records of Texas life—*Willah Weddon, Stockbridge, Michigan.*

Tombstone, Arizona

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Trails Grown Dim

Dalton

I would like to correspond with anyone who has any knowledge of Christopher Columbus Dalton, who was born probably in 1840. He married Sallie Margaret Bentley about 1880, in Montgomery County, Missouri. He deserted Sallie Margaret before their child was born.

Christopher Columbus Dalton was a cousin to the "Dalton Brothers," and he may have been the Kit Dalton who rode with Quantrill.—**Richard Bentley, 434 S. Mollison No. 9, El Cajon, California, 92020.**

Davis-Turner-Tompkins-Sisney-McClain-Humphrey

I would like to correspond with others on the following surnames or any descendants of the following persons: Ephraim Davis, born 1826; Jesse Turner, born 1794; Benjamin Tompkins, born 1780; John Sisney, born 1797; James McClain, born 1841. I would also like to correspond with any descendants of Robert and Albert Humphrey, who were from Chicago, Illinois.—**Janie Luster, P.O. Box 1389, Campbell, California 95009.**

Daine

I recently purchased a "Bridgeport Rig" holster. On the back is the name Jack Daine, Goldfield, Nevada. He may have been a gunfighter or cowboy in the late 1890s or early 1900s. The holster was purchased in Mexico, so he may have spent time there also. I would like to hear from anyone with information on this man.—**Jack B. Larsen, 334 W. 8th Street, Erie, Pennsylvania 16502.**

Campbell

I am searching for information on my husband's great-grandparents, who are believed to have been born in Kentucky. Their names are James Marion Campbell and Martha Pemberton Campbell. We know they moved to the Platte area around Agency, Missouri, where they raised their family of eight children. Their names were John Henry, born 1841; Ezekial Marion, 1844; William F., 1847; Nancy Jane, 1850; James A., 1853; George H., 1858, Stephen A., 1861; and Robert Lee, 1864. We would like to know the names of James Campbell's and Martha Campbell's parents. We will gladly share information.—**Lucille Campbell, 11226 Manzanita Road, Lakeside, California 92040.**

Hardy

I am looking for information on my great-grandfather Robert Clemons Hardy, born in Texas in 1882. He had four brothers, Reubin, Joe, John, and Ben; he also had one sister, Florance Hardy Lovette.

I am also looking for information on my great-grandmother, Maude Bell Hardy. Her maiden name was Caffey. She had five brothers, Ervin, Jim, Otis, Oral, and Truley Caffey; and five sisters, Eva, Nina, Artie, Inez, and Vita. Her mother's maiden name was Bates.—**Jesse Hardy, 859 N.E. 7th Street, Grants Pass, Oregon 97526.**

Howard

On July 1, 1989, over one hundred members of the Howard family had a reunion in Clovis, New Mexico. They are descendants of John Wesley Howard, who was born in Tennessee, circa 1835. John Wesley Howard left Tennessee in 1870 with his wife Nancy Ann Rudd Howard and six small boys, William Buckhannan, John Berry, James Payne, Samuel Sandford, and Joseph White Howard. On the journey, Nancy died in Arkansas.

John Wesley later married Bathena Elizabeth Roark, the widow of Charles Roark. Bathena and Charles had two sons, Page and Robert Roark. John Wesley and Bathena had four children, Charles, Betty, Molly, and Bandy. Including the offspring from the previous marriages, the couple had a total of twelve children.

Sometime in the 1890s, the couple participated in one of the Oklahoma land runs. They settled in the Elk City, Oklahoma, area.

My grandfather, Bandy Howard, married Lena Butler, the daughter of William O. Butler and Charlotte Morris Butler. William and Charlotte had a son, Guy, who went to Arizona. William O. Butler was born in Texas in 1856 and is said to have Cherokee ancestry. I am having difficulty researching the Butlers. I will appreciate any help anyone can give me with them or the Howards.—**Janice Turner, P.O. Box 1985, Clovis, New Mexico 88101.**

Jackson-Burkeen

I am seeking information on the Jackson-Burkeen families who went from North Carolina to East Tennessee in 1800; to McNairy County, Tennessee, in 1826; and to Leon County, Texas, in 1866. Reuben Jackson (son of Jacob and Mary Fillpot) married Emily Todd. Their Children were James, born 1846; Sarah, 1849; Andrew Lafayette, 1852; Mary, 1853; Jacob Isaiah "Doc," 1854; Reuben, 1859; David, 1861; Josiah, 1863; and Nancy, 1865.

Moses Burkeen (son of James, 1805, North Carolina) married Mary Jackson in 1871. Their children were James, born 1872; Nancy, 1876; and Moses, 1878. After Mary died, the elder Moses married her sister, Nancy, and they had William, 1886; Mary, 1890; George, 1894; Lillie, 1897; Bertha, 1900; and Rosa, 1904.

I need information on the Burkeens, also spelled Brackeen, Brickun, Burkine. These families went by boxcar to Texas with families named Dove, Vitatoe, and Moore. They got off in Jewett and bought land in the Redland community. Where are Jacob and Reuben buried? Did they die in Tennessee?—**Doris Cureton Valentine, 18454 Walnut Street, Hesperia, California 92345.**

Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient. Please type or print your query and limit letters to 150 words or less. Photos are welcome. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to above is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

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Harry Wheeler vs. Joe Bostwick

—October 23, 1904, Tucson, Arizona—

By BILL O'NEAL

Harry Wheeler joined the Arizona Rangers on July 6, 1903. An iron-willed ex-cavalryman with a stern devotion to duty, Private Wheeler quickly impressed his superiors. On an early personnel report. Capt. Tom Rynning wrote of Wheeler, "Excellent service, active & intelligent, an officer of great ability." Just four months after enlisting, the twenty-seven-year-old Wheeler was promoted to sergeant.

Although stationed in Willcox, Sergeant Wheeler had official business in Tucson on Saturday, October 22, 1904. The following evening he was in Wanda's Restaurant on Congress Street when two holdup men approached the nearby Palace Saloon. One man positioned himself across the street as a lookout, while the other, Joe Bostwick, crept around to the rear of the saloon.

Inside the Palace four regulars were on duty: night bartender Decker; Lincoln, the craps dealer; Johnson, the roulette dealer; and a black porter. Half an hour before midnight, the only customers were "Policy Sam" Meadows, E.O. Smith, miner Matt Fayson, and carpenter M.D. Beede.

Bostwick slipped through the rear door of the Palace. He wore a slouch hat, a pair of overalls, and a long, faded coat. He brandished a long-barreled .45 and his face was covered with a red bandana, complete with eyeholes.

"Hands up!" he shouted.

Beede instantly darted out the front door, but everyone else's attention was riveted on the masked man and his gun. "Throw up your hands," Bostwick repeated nervously, "and march into that side room."

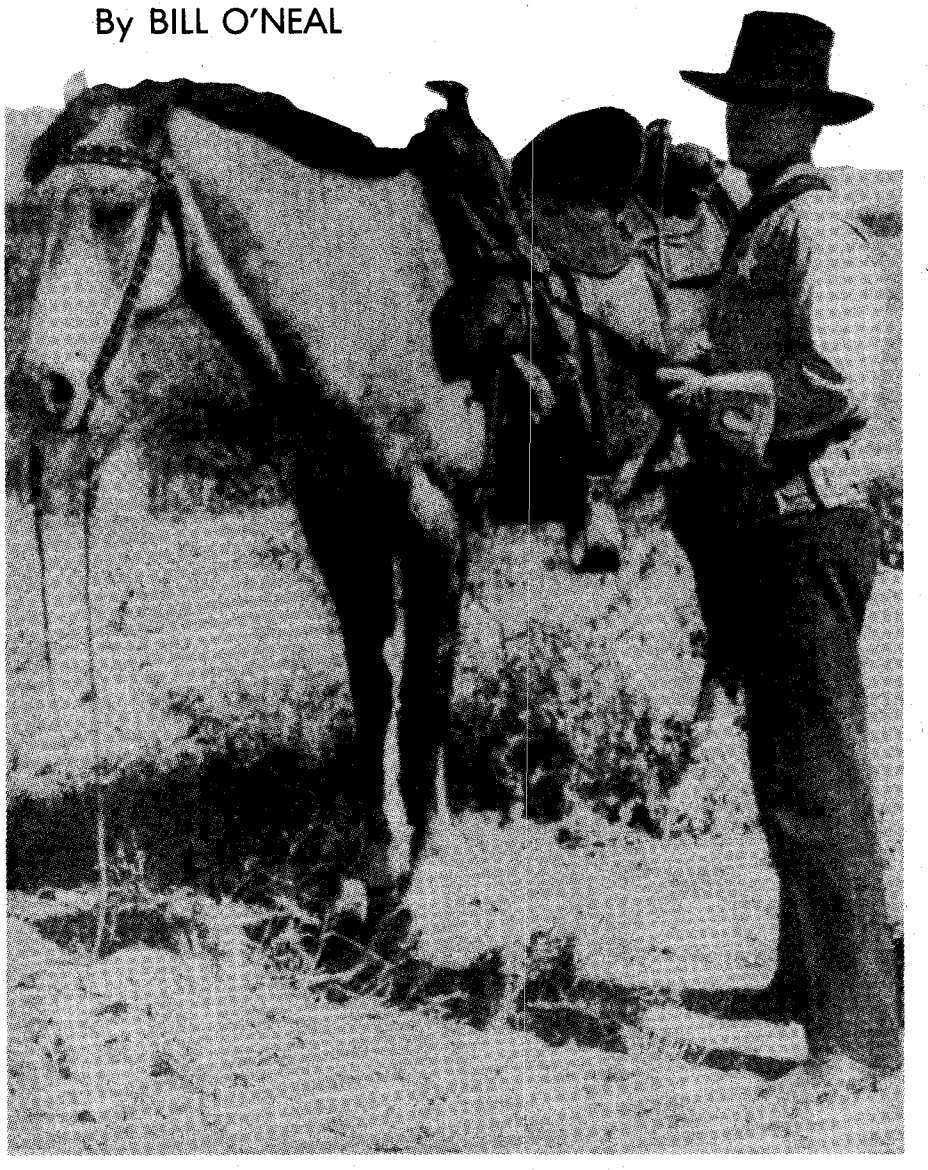
As the men obediantly moved toward the side room, the jittery bandit snapped. "Hold 'em up higher—hold up your digits."

Bartender Decker, with surprising levity, held up one finger, then another, and asked if that was enough. "Get a move on," growled the masked desperado, and Decker wisely raised his hands and followed the others. Bostwick edged toward the craps table, where money was scattered near the dice.

Outside on Congress Street, the fleeing Beede encountered Wheeler, who had just emerged from Wanda's Restaurant. Beede blurted out that a robbery was in progress, and when Wheeler turned toward the saloon he added, "Don't go in there—there is a holdup going on!"

"All right," calmly replied the Ranger. "That's what I'm here for."

Wheeler, an expert marksman with rifle or pistol, pulled his single-action Colt .45 and stalked to the front door of the saloon. Bostwick spotted him and



Arizona State Archives

Harry Wheeler engaged in his first shootout as an Arizona Ranger while foiling a Tucson saloon holdup in 1904.

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whirled to fire his revolver, but Wheeler triggered the first shot. The heavy .45 slug grazed Bostwick's forehead above the right eye. Bostwick fired wildly, then Wheeler drilled him in the right side of the chest. The stricken bandit groaned and collapsed to the floor.

When the shooting started, the lookout man fired a round at Wheeler. The bullet embedded itself harmlessly in a leg of the roulette table, and in the excitement of the fight Wheeler did not until later realize the source of the fourth shot.

The men in the saloon crowded around the fallen thief, and a physician named Olcott was summoned to the scene. Dr. Olcott ordered the wounded man to be carried to a local hospital.

Wheeler telegraphed news of the shooting to Captain Rynning in Benson, and Rynning caught the first train to Tucson. The day after the shooting it was learned that the would-be bandit, calling himself "George Anderson," had checked into the San Augustin Hotel more than a week prior to the holdup attempt. "Anderson" disappeared after a couple of days, and the hotel manager entered his room and confiscated a traveling bag. Papers inside the luggage indicated that he was an advance man for the Independent Carnival Company and gave his name as Walter F. Stanley. The hotel manager recalled that the man had complained about being bothered by people to whom he owed money.

On Monday night, word came that a hobo on an eastbound freight train had told other transients in his boxcar that he had a wounded partner in Tucson. Remembering the fourth shot in the fray, Wheeler promptly took a train to the east. On Tuesday night, however, Bostwick died, and orders were telegraphed to Wheeler to return for an inquest the next day. Wheeler reluctantly abandoned his pursuit of the alleged lookout man and headed back to Tucson.

By the time he arrived, it had been learned that the dead man was from Locust Grove, Georgia, and that his wife was in Denver. Telegrams from the deceased's father revealed that his real name was Joe Bostwick; the elder Bostwick directed that his son should be buried in Tucson.

When interviewed by a reporter for the Tucson *Citizen*, Wheeler commented, "I am sorry that this happened, but it was either his life or mine, and if I hadn't been just a little quicker on the draw than he was I might be in his position now. Under the circumstances, if I had it to do over again I think I would do exactly the same thing."

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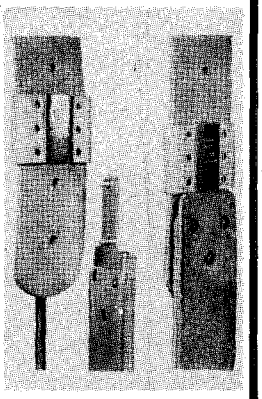

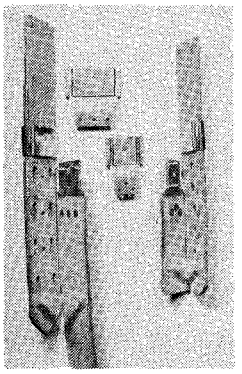

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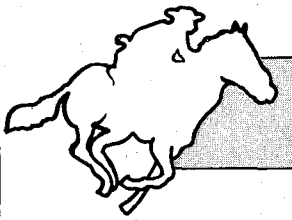

"He Would Never Stoop to Burglary!"

By PAUL TAYLOR

Milton Anthony Sharp neither smoked, swore, gambled, nor chewed tobacco, and he drank only in moderation. His charming manners and cultured use of the English language made him the target of many a female. His poise could have been mistaken for that of a diplomat or congressman.

Author's Photo

Milton Sharp, one of his victims reported, "was one of the politest gentlemen I ever met."

But diplomat or congressman Sharp was not. He had a far different occupation. Between 1878 and 1880 Sharp held up fifteen stages in the Bodie, California, and Carson City, Nevada, area, where gold and silver from Nevada's Comstock Lode were frequently transported. Following each robbery he took the loot to his San Francisco home on Minna Street, where he lived in ease and luxury while the money lasted.

One of Sharp's victims in a Bodie stage robbery, Col. K.B. Brown of Nevada, told a San Francisco reporter, "I never knew anybody who could rob stages better than Sharp, not even Black Bart. He was one of the politest gentlemen I ever met. There was nothing vulgar or coarse about him. Everything was done in a business-like way, and there was no unnecessary rudeness. He was particularly gallant to lady passengers and always acted like a high-toned gentleman."

Sharp never resorted to violence, even when his partner was killed by a stage guard during one holdup. He never encountered an empty strongbox, which indicates he probably had inside information about a stage's cargo.

The highwayman had the same modus operandi for each job. After halting the coach and taking the weapons from the guard and driver, Sharp politely ordered the passengers to line up with their hands in the air. Next, one by one, he turned their pockets inside out, letting the contents fall to the ground. The victims were then told to take three steps forward while Milton gathered the valuables, smashed open the strongbox, rifled the mail, and disappeared into the wilderness on horse.

Only once did the careful robber lose his stolen cargo. In February 1880, he waylaid the Sacramento stage on its way to Carson City. Sharp made off with $13,000 in gold notes from the Mills Bank of Sacramento. With a posse not far behind, he buried the notes beneath some rocks on the South Fork of the American River. As the story goes, a rancher stumbled upon the small fortune and used the gold notes to pay

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Wild Old Days

off the mortgage on his ranch.

Throughout 1880, wanted posters with Sharp's description were a common sight around California and Nevada. One Wells Fargo poster said Sharp was "about 45-years-old, with a dark complexion, Roman nose, scar on his right forearm and bright flashing eyes which he turns on you when he talks, never taking them away when conversing."

Despite the widespread search by lawmen, Sharp remained free, robbing six stages between May 15 and September 5, 1880. The frequency of his holdups was greater than that of the more infamous Black Bart.

Milton's refusal to use aliases led to his downfall. On September 17, 1880, Wells Fargo detective Jim Hume spotted a carpet bag with Sharp's name and address in San Francisco's Market Street depot. Hume staked out the Minna Street home and arrested Sharp when he returned that night from the opera house.

Inside the valise Hume found $3,000 and a gold watch from a recent robbery near Bodie. That evidence was enough to insure Milton a long stay in the pokey. Since the robbery occurred in Nevada, Sharp was transported to the Aurora jail.

His refined and facile tongue enabled Milton to talk the jailer into giving him a penknife for carving wooden dolls for the jailer's children, a task which he performed to perfection.

During the night he escaped by digging through the mortar and stone wall of his cell and disappeared into the Esmeralda snowdrifts, still wearing a fifteen-pound ball and chain, or, as it was locally known, Oregon Boot.

The excitement which followed is still remembered in western Nevada. Wells Fargo offered a handsome reward, and overnight the countryside swarmed with the express company's police. The Aurora authorities, the county commissioners, and the state posted additional offers; as a result, mines were closed and businessmen put up their shutters while half the populace went on an armed bandit-hunt in much the spirit that ranchers in prairie states convene for a wolf drive.

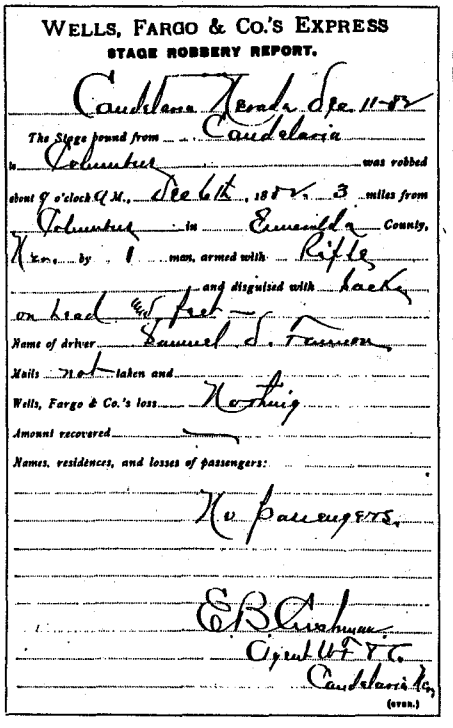
All bullion shipments out of the Esmeralda were suspended while Sharp was at large. He was not to be found. What was found, however, near Aurora, was the Oregon Boot. That marked the first time in America that a man had freed himself from such a device.

A week later, Milton Sharp, half starved and nearly frozen, turned himself in to the astonished sheriff of Candelaria, Nevada.

It is said that Sharp was critical of the Aurora jail. "Anybody can get out of the cells," he said. "The only part of it you can't escape from is the tank where they keep the Mexicans."

Sharp served a twenty-year term in the Nevada state penitentiary before being pardoned, never to return to crime again.

At the time of Sharp's "capture," Colonel Brown was asked by a San Francisco reporter why the stage robber had not stolen food, for if he had he probably would have escaped. "Break into some ranch or miner's cabin? No, sir! Not in a hundred years," Brown said. "Milton A. Sharp was a stage robber, sir, but he would never stoop to burglary!"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Candelaria Nevada Dec 11-82

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So frequent were stage holdups in California and Nevada that Wells Fargo supplied agents with a standard form for their reports. This one records a minor skirmish while Sharp was serving a twenty-year term in prison.

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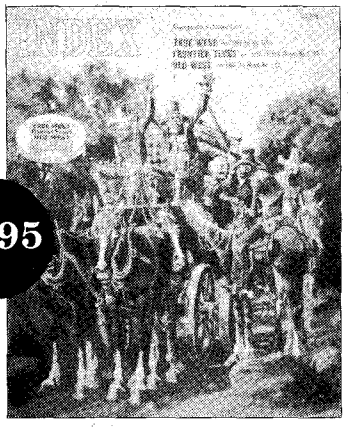

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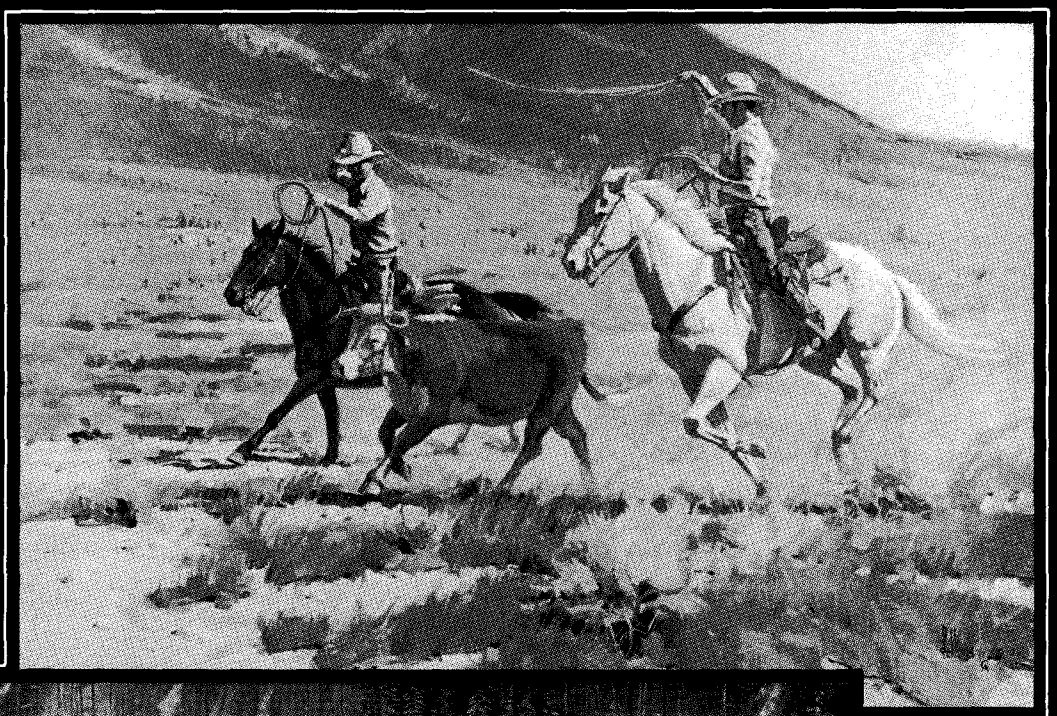

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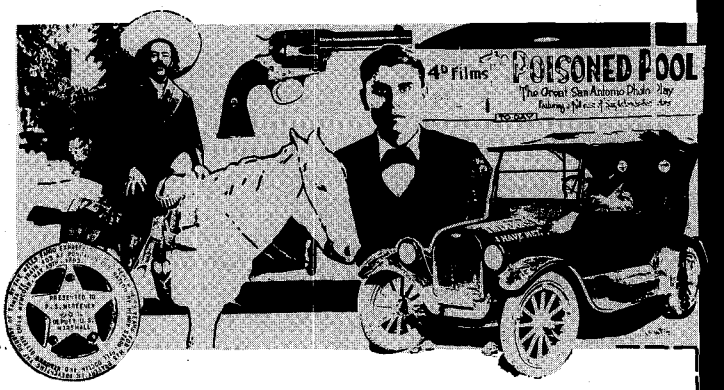

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